1933

(Monk. Home.
31st Dec. 1932.)

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Rodmell.

23rd Dec 1932

This is not the first day of the new year: but the discrepancy may be forgiven. I must write off my dejected rambling misery—having just read over the 30,000 words of Flush & come to the conclusion that they wont do. Oh what a waste—what a bore! Four months of work, & heaven knows how much reading—not of an exalted kind either—& I cant see how to make anything of it. Its not the right subject for that length: its too slight & too serious. Much good in it but would have to be much better. So here I am two days before Christmas, pitched into one of my grey welters. Worse, its partly overworking the Pargiters. But I cant get back into Flush. Save, I feel: & L. will be disappointed; & the money loss too—thats a bore. I took it up impetuously after the Waves by way of a change: no forethought in me: & so got landed: & would need a months hard work—& even then I doubt it. In that time I might have done Dryden & Pope. And I'm then led to begin—no to end the year with a doleful plaint. Its blazing hot; like spring, with the bees on the flowers. Never mind: this is not a reverse of the first order—not at all.

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1933

This is in fact the last day of 1932, but I am so tired of polishing off Flush—such a pressure on the brain is caused by doing ten pages daily—that I am taking a morning off, & shall use it here, in my lazy way, to sum up the whole of life. By that phrase, one of my colloquialisms, I daily mean, I wish I could deliver myself of a picture of all my friends, thoughts, doings, projects at this moment. Vita is on the high seas, sailing to America. Our new car came, sarcastically, yesterday—we are lent one. And I had a long letter from Ottoline, of sheer affection, & one still longer from Ethel Smyth, of dubious jealousy & suppressed temper & love strangled & out-bursting. And Anrep wants to put me on the floor of the Bank of England as Clio,— On cards, thanks, catalogues of winter sales. On Monday we go up to Angelica's party. On Tuesday we come back. And we shall be here till the 14th of Jan. And Miss Scott Johnson doesn't do. And we are as usual reading manuscripts: the dew pond is silting: the gold fish are dead: this a clear pale blue eyed winter day; & — — — my thoughts turn with excitement to the Pargiters, for I long to feel my sails blow out, & to be careering with Elvira, Maggie & the rest over the whole of human life. And indeed I cannot sum this up, being fried in my head. I think of Lytton too. Yes. Of course this autumn has been a tremendous revelation. You will understand that all

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impediments suddenly dropped off. It was a great season of liberation. Everything appeared very distinct amazingly exciting. I had no restrictions whatever, & was thus free to define my attitude with a rigour & certainty I have never known before. I laid about me & cut down the nettles. I said I will no longer be fettered by any artificial tie. I therefore spoke out in my own voice to Ebby & tried to ~~subdue~~ circumscribe Logan. Well — this always doubtful how far one human being can be free. The ties are not purely artificial. One cannot cut away absolutely straight. However, I secured a season of intoxicating exhilaration. Nor do I intend to let myself pay for it with the usual black despair. I intend to circumvent that supervening ghost — that which always trails its damp wings behind my glories. I shall be very wary, very adept — as now — writing languidly to avoid a headache. To suppress one self & seem freely out in joy, in laughter with impersonal joys & laughters — such is the perfectly infallible & simple prescription. For example, with Julian & Selina Ramsey last night — why not simply become fluid in their lives, if my own is dim? And to use one's hands & eyes: to talk to people; to be a straw on the river, now & then — passive, not ~~?~~ striving, to say this is this. If one does not lie back & sum up & say to the moment, this very moment, stay you are so fair, what will be one's gain, dying? No: stay, this moment. No one ever says that enough. always hurry. I am now going in, to see L. & say stay this moment.

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Thursday
Jan 5th

I am so delighted with my own ingenuity in having
after only ten years or so, made myself, in 5
minutes, a perfect writing board, with pen tray
attached, so that I cant ever again fly into a fury
bereft of ink & pen at the most critical moment
of a writers life & see my sudden sentence
dissipate utterly all for lack of a pen handy—
& besides I'm so glad to be just off page 100 of
Flush—this the third time of writing that
Whitechapel scene, & I doubt if its worth it,
that I cant help dispersing myself on this free
blue page, which thank God in heaven, needs no
re-writing. Its a wet misty day: my
windows out here are all fog. And I
daresay we shall drive our new car, though
its still only a substitute, twenty miles or
so this afternoon, by way of a test. It is
like travelling first instead of third.
Bunny's new Pocahontas is reviewed in the Lit Sup.
this morning, & I augur a great success, I
think without any serious pangs of jealousy.
But that of course, has yet to be proved.
Jealousy may stick out its green paws,
being the uncertain fabric I am— But
I think not, if only because I'm in sublime
reading fettle: seriously I believe that the
strain of the Waves weakened my concentration
for months—& then all that article composing
for the CR. I am now at the height of my
powers in that line, & have read, with
close & powerful attention, some 12 or 15
books since I came here. What a joy—
what a sense as of a Rolls Royce engine

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as a mere passing its 70 miles an hour in my
brain: so that if Bunny's book is a good one,
there will be another stretch of road ahead of me
for a few days. What I hitherto have disliked
in Bunny is the falsetto. ~~Being~~ Assuming a
mask to speak through: out comes his own
voice stylised, mincing, though well articulated
& controlled. Lytton's raging "Ye old Cocke & Bulls"
of one of them sums up my meaning. I
am also encouraged to read by the feeling
that I am on the flood of creativeness in
The Pargiters — what a liberation that gives one —
as if everything added to that torrent —
all books become fluid & swell the stream.
But I daresay this is a sign only that I'm
doing what is rather superficial & hasty &
Eager. I dont know. I've another
week of flush here, & then shall come to
grips with my 20 years in one chapter.
problem. I visualise this book now as a
curiously uneven & time sequence —
a series of great balloons, linked by straight
narrow passages of narrative. I can take
liberties with the representational form
which I could not dare when I wrote
Night & Day — a book that taught me much,
bad though it may be. And now I
must write to N. Darwin about her
~~Gran~~ Jemmy Button. Hampsons
new novel is so bad we are going to
advise against publishing it.

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Sunday Jan. 15th

I have come out here, our last morning, to write letters, so, naturally, I write this book. But then I havent written a line these 3 weeks — only typed Flush, which, Heaven be praised, I 'finished', almost without inverted commas, yesterday. Ah but my writing Flush has been gradually shoved out, as by a cuckoo born in the nest, by the Pargiters. How odd the minds functions are! About a week ago, I began the making up of scenes — unconsciously: saying phrases to myself; & so, for a week, I've sat here, staring at the type writer, & speaking aloud phrases of the Pargiters. This becomes more & more maddening. It will however all be run off in a few days, when I let myself write again. I am reading Parnell. Yes; but then scene making increases the rate of my heart into uncomfortable rapidity. While I was forcing myself to do Flush my old headache came back — for the first time this autumn. Why should the P.s make my heart jump; why should Flush stiffen the back of my neck? What connection has the brain with the body? Nobody in Harley St could explain, & yet the symptoms are purely physical & as distinct as one book is from the other. Meanwhile, L's rose stock has given him some form of itch — He picks what he thinks black insects off his neck — I can imagine nothing more terrible than to have insects under ones skin — I should see them parading in squads. Now

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I will try to call in my mind from the P. & M. & Nick it to Mr. Shaw Desmond, to Tom, to Holtby, to Furse; but not I think to E. Smyth.

And I was forgetting to say that The Deluge came yesterday. It was expected at 1.15. at 3 Julian & Angelica arrived. At 4 as L & I were going to the Shop to buy sweets L. groaning. Cried out its Come. And it had gone. It swept up the village past us, but returned. In colour - shape its beyond the wildest dreams - I mean its elegant green silver beautifully compact modelled form & not too rich - not a money car. We drove it to Lewes, & shall now take it to London: & so, I say, write letters a cloudy, goose wing day with silver shields.

Thursday Jan. 19th

It must be confessed that the Pargiters are like cuckoos in my nest - which should be Flush. I have only 50 pages to correct & send to Mabel; & these cursed scenes & dialogues will go on springing up in my head; I sit & after [illegible] after correcting one page, I sit mooning for 20 minutes. I daresay this will increase the blood pressure when I come to write. But its a tiresome bewildering distraction now.

Then we began London briskly with Leonard's lice - his incurable & disgusting skin disease. We went to a Wimpole Street specialist - happily his house was almost opposite Flush's so that I could count the stones & verify the knockers - its true

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they have none, but the houses are very well pointed. while L. & Elly ~~inside~~ were under the cuttlebay room. Finally the Dr. said L. had never been better at all. And so, as the day wore on, the incurable disease was cured. Then came Plomer & Marjorie to dine: & we went to ~~the~~ Sadlers Wells & saw Pomona with Nina's designs — dresses, scenery — all very pale — beige — I mean Fra Angelico against a battle ground of Carcis — but clear (said to be from dim) knows I cant keep my wits at the ballet; cant throw a ring round so many wild horses — music, dancing, decoration: & so hop on my perch, & merely make parrot noises of appreciation — when, at Fitzroy Street, we all had hot sausages. Large dishes of hot, writhing sausages, looking indecent, like black snakes amorously intertwined, were handed round. There was Bunny, flushed with triumph (Grant back Pocahontas unread — cant read with my head stuffed with Peyster) & then I said I had dreamt I was in his arms, so he took me in his arms — pale phantom of old love — the love of men — women — in the pantry. Roger was there, — is he older, less volatile? He makes his signal to Helen sooner than of old: & drives off in that blind bull of a car — it charges with its head down — but not before, as I maliciously observed, he had cross-questioned me about his lectures. ~~This~~ insistent Egotism has its charm. I never ask him to read my essays.

so home in the new car.

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21st Jan.

Well, Flush lingers on & I cannot despatch him. Thats the sad truth. I always see something I could press tighter, or enwrap more completely. There's no trifling with words—cant be done: not when they're to stand 'forever'. So I am battening down my Pargiters say till Wednesday—it mayn't be later, I swear. And now I grow doubtful of the value of those figures. I'm afraid of the didactic: perhaps it was only that spurious passion that made me rattle away before Christmas. Anyhow I enjoyed it immensely, & shall again—oh to be free, in fiction, making up my scenes again—however discreetly. Such is my cry this very fine cold January morning. In 10 minutes Angelica comes & we go to Don Giovanni at Sadlers Wells. Have seen this week besides Roger. Marjorie. Colin Sedley who has been bound in a Police Court, strapped to a bed in St Pancras Infirmary—been raving mad, I can believe—& Robson: Ethel Smyth. Mrs Hunter is dead. Died standing, eating drinking dressing penniless. ruined discredited having got through 40,000 a year, not all of her own; but they say she was a great hostess & all is forgiven—rightly I think, though in another class she would have been in prison. Such is the price we pay for our great hostesses. Witness Sibyl Colefax working in a shop.

Thursday 26th Jan.

Well, Flush is, I swear, despatched. Nobody can say I dont take trouble with my little stories. And now, having bent my mind for 5 weeks sternly this way, I must unbend them the other—the Pargiter way. No critic

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ever given full weight to the ~~[illegible]~~ desire of the mind for change. Talk of being many sided — naturally one must go the other way. Now if I ever had the wits to go into the Shakespeare business I believe one would find the same law there — tragedy comedy, & so on. Looming behind the Ps. I can just see the shape of pure poetry beckoning me. But the Ps is a delightful solid possession to be engaged tomorrow. How bad I shall find it: Not a letter has come my way these 2 days (oh but several parcels) & therefore lapse into the healing sanctuary of anonymity. I think the Beau Monde has given me up — Ethel Sands is undoubtedly, no doubt reasonably annoyed with what Logan has chosen to purvey of my letters. So I say I will rout further in the bran pie; & go to my Club & meet young working women. I am going to learn Italian. Bianca my unknown adorer is to teach me. And I am to have Holtby to tea today. So perhaps I can make do without Chelsea. I have bought several things freely & cheaply for the first time at the Winter Sales. Yesterday at Mar & Snel groves I said, by way of a joke to the girl, "What coats rubbed, they showed sell it me for £3 — And she took me seriously. I heard an acrid conversation behind a screen. The girl was a greenhorn. You've no right to tell customers the coat is rubbed. Thats what its reduced for & so on. To my surprise my 3.19.6 — formerly £5.10 Coat was given me — all for my joke — for

£ ~~7~~ 18. Oh dear — the world of shops!

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Thursday 2nd Feb

No we are not deserted by the world—oh dear no: dinner Mary Monday; dinner here Friday; James & Alix dinner Wednesday—to talk about Lyttons things, say James. "I want to see you both alone": Hope, will you come to dinner again? Ethel, will you lunch at Woking: Margaret West to tea on Sunday—a possible Press manager. (L.J. to go) & Bianca to tea today: on top of which we have to decide about 35 Gordon Square on Saturday. By chance, Martins sent us an order: we saw it: well it might do—Its a great big corner house: a warren of a basement: a studio, a bad dining room & kitchen: but great rooms looking onto the square; & street, with garden behind: with a side door: so that publishing is possible—they say: altogether, I expect we shall take it for 9 years, at much the same rent as this, & the Pritchards will share. Not that I much want a move in March, with the Pargiters on my hands. I am going however to work lazily, spaciously, fruitfully on that book. Today I finished—rather more completely than usual—revising the first chapter. I'm leaving out the interchapters—compacting them in the text: & project an appendix of dates. A good idea? And Galsworthy died two days ago, it suddenly struck me, walking just now by the Serpentine after calling on Mrs W. (who's been dying—is recovering) with the gulls opening their Scimitars—mane of gulls. Galsworthy's dead: & A. Bennett told me he simply couldnt stick Galsworthy. Had to praise Jacks book to Mrs G. But I could say what I liked against Galsworthy. That stark man lies dead.

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I steal time from my Italian verbs. Yes I think I know them. I am having 2 lessons weekly from Bianca: she suggests thrice; but as I have to get in Shiel etc. Oh yesterday it was like being a snail shell & having a thrush tapping till she beat & her incessant voice broke my shell. I always say "Poor old lady". For I rather think she came all the way from Woking for this dog battle to hear. I am half ashamed—yet cant see that I'm to blame. And now she goes to Bath for 5 weeks—yes, to my relief I own. Because I cant bear being a snail shell. And she is so positive, so interested. Being Ethel is so habitual to her. I'm launched again on the Pargiters, in this the blank season of the year—Nessa at Charleston, Clive in Jamaica, Roger in Tampier—Vita in America—which of my friends is left. But Desmond dined the night before last; Morgan came in last night; Holtby today—so there's no lack of people. Now of course the P.s runs in rather slack—this fact recording is too flat.

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Saturday March 25th

It is an utterly corrupt society I have just remarked, speaking in the person of Elvira Pargiter, & I will take nothing that it can give me &c &c: Now, as Virginia Woolf, I have to write — oh dear me what a bore — to the Vice Chancellor of Manchester Univ^y & say that I refuse to be made a Doctor of Letters. And to Lady Simon, who has been urgent in the matter, & asks us to stay. Lord knows how I'm to put Elvira's language into polite journalese. What an odd coincidence! that real life should provide precisely the situation I was writing about! I hardly know which I am, & where: Virginia or Elvira: in the Pargiters or outside. We dined with Susan Lawrence two nights ago. Mrs Stocks of Man^r Univ^y was there. How delighted my husband will be to give you your degree in July! she began. And had to whittled off a great deal about the delight of Manchester in seeing me honoured, before I had to pluck up courage & say: But I wont take it. After that there was a general argument, with Susan Lawrence & the Nevinsons, (Evelyn Sharp) They all said they would take a degree from a University though not an honour from the State. They made me feel a little silly, priggish & perhaps extreme: but only superficially. Nothing would induce me to connive at all that humbug. Nor would it give me, even momentarily, any pleasure. I really believe that Nessa & I — she went with me, & used my arguments about the silliness of honours for women — are without the publicity sense. Now for the polite letter. Dear Vice Chancellor —

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25th Tuesday
March.

The polite letters have been sent. So far I have had, nor could have had any answer. No, Manchester, I need not emerge from my cocoon in July to have a tuft of fur put on my head. Then the finest spring ever known—soft, hot, blue, misty. The trees all out, the other day in the park, when we took Bunny's child to Hayling Island. It was a June day. Poor Ray like a slum woman, so gaunt, so grim. He had a boat. It was cold on the beach—the island is mottled with houses, like the rest of the world. And then down to Maidenhead in June weather—more bungalows. And dinner with Lady Rhondda. I felt a disappointed woman. Should have had 10 children perhaps. She was sitting alone, shawled dowdy in an old Hampstead lady flat with a garden with great trees. She is what they call, I expect, 'inhibited'—something tentative furtive. Discussed Time & Tide &c. She lives for T. & T. but is a little under the thumb of Miss Ellis Roberts. Then on to Clive: back from Jamaica. "The steward came in; & was surprised to find a young lady stark naked brushing her teeth." True Clive. Julian has failed to get her fellowship. I think, or Nessa thinks, of Burma.

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Thursday April 6th

Oh I'm so tired! I've written myself out over the Pargiters:
the last Chap. I've brought it down to Elvira in bed —
the scene I've had in my mind ever so many months,
but I can't write it now. It's the turn of the book.
It needs a great shove to swing it round on its
hinges. As usual, doubts rush in. Isn't it much too
quick, too thin, too surface bright? Well, I'm
too jaded to crunch it up, if that's so; &
so shall bury it for a month — till we're back
from Italy perhaps: & write on Goldsmith &c.
meanwhile. Then seize on it fresh, & dash it
off in June July August September. Four
months should finish the first draught — 100,000
50,000 words written in 5 months — my record
words I think. I've seen so many people to
This is a time of ending. The people of Manchester have
see. Ott. tomorrow
written, very stiffly, with additional respect. And I'm
for me, because I dont take honours. Martyr talk Italian.
fought shy to hear Signor ... about her Car-
Minie is hopeless. The clashes on ... is in Italy. Nessa —
I limp, grumble. Bianca ... Last night Lord
the other at Charleston. ... when day,
Olivier, a jolly old boor, has been a dog in her day,
dined here. & Pippa came in late — grown
very thick, but looks unhappy. And we
went to Bedford on Tuesday in the June weather —
to St Neots, & saw the carved Ceiling.
I began the last great vol. of Goldsmith this
morning.

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Monday
13th March

So I have worked myself two days this time. There is
not one idea left in the cage. & but we go
today, & I shall sun, with only a few books. No
I will not write: I will not see people. A
little nip from Germany in the TLS. which I
must answer. But indeed I cant find words —
use the wrong ones — thats my state: the familiar
state after these 3 months writing — what fun
that book is to me! And pressing on Italian, &
seeing a mint of people — the state I say is
quite familiar & will vanish; yes, & then there's
Italy to come. I have my new corduroys: &
Mrs. Ronald Murray is appointed my dressmaker.
Sibyl lunched — we hear her dry sharp claws
tapping the perch as she hops. Then Peronel,
amply gentle silver grey, & very — what is the
word? — there I go forgetting. The word I like —
integrity. Now I must collect my things.
Nelly in the way touchingly friendly. Age
is like lichen on roofs — knowing people I mean:
gives our relationships some yellow red glow, so
I think. Ann & Judy dined here. Ann at the
stage where she likes action, rather than
detective plays. Judy as candid as a boy of 10
and I want to write on Goldsmith. Halifax is
Turgenev. And Ethel is "cutting the painter"
(between us — for the 100th time) And — no,
I must really learn a smoother narrative style.

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Tuesday
April 25th

No, we didnt see nobody at Rodmell. Lydia & Maynard arrived before we had been there half an hour: & we dined with them, & were invited to the royal party at Tilton — Mr Hambro being the uncle of the proprietor: & the friend of Tommy & of the Glu-chem: & they had crab, but the chicken was tough, so we did not go. Thats all over — our ten days: & I wrote daily, almost, at Goldsmith — dont much see the point of my Goldsmiths & so on — & read Goldsmith, & so on. Yes: I should now be correcting Flush proofs — I doubt that little book to some extent: but I'm in a doubting mood: the scrambled mood of transience, for on Friday 5th we go to Siena: so I cant settle, & make up my story, in which lies permanence. And as usual I want to seethe myself in something new — to break the mould of habit entirely, & get that escape which Italy & the sun give: the lounging: & the indifference of all that to all this bruising about. I rise, like a bubble out of a bottle. And my eyes hurt. & I must go & see Mr Daggett — Sheppards Johnny — today. And have I Italian known: & see Vita. Christabel. we But the Pargiters. I think this will be a terrific affair. I must be bold & adventurous. I want to give the whole of the present society — nothing less: facts, as well as the vision. And to combine them both

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I mean, the Waves going on simultaneously with Night & Day. Is this possible? At present I have assembled 50,000 words of 'real' life: now in the next 50, I must somehow comment; Lord knows how — while keeping the march of events. The figure of Elvira is the difficulty. She may become too dominant. She is to be seen only in relation to other things. This should give I think a great edge to both of the realities — this contrast. At present, I think the run of events is too glued & too free. It reads thin: but lively. How am I to get the depth without becoming static? But I like these problems, & anyhow there's a wind & a vigour in this naturalness. It should aim at immense breadth & immense intensity. It should include satire, comedy, poetry, narrative, & what form is to hold them all together? Should I bring in a play, letters, poems? And I think I begin to grasp the whole. And it's to end with the press of daily normal life continuing. And there are to be millions of ideas but no preaching — history, politics, feminism, art, literature — in short a summing up of all I know, feel, laugh at, despise, like, admire hate & so on.

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28 April.

A mere note — we got out of the car last night & began walking down to the Serpentine. A summer evening. Chestnuts in their crinolines, bearing tapers: grey green water & so on. Suddenly L. hove off: & there was Shaw, dwindled shanks, white beard; striding along. We talked, by a railing for 15 mins. He stood with his arms folded, very upright, leaning back: teeth gold tipped. ~~just~~ Just come from the Dentist, & lured out for a walk by the weather. Very friendly. Shakes his arm, to make one shake his like one. A great spurting of ideas. "You forget that an aeroplane is like a car — it bumps — we went over the great wall — saw a little dim object in the distance. Aeroplane the tropics are the place. The Cingalese people are the original human beings — we are smudged copies. So I caught the Cingalese looking at us with horror — that we should be human beings! Of course the tour cost thousands: got to see us. I'd think we were hardest the price of the fare to Hampton Court. Lots of old Ministers had saved up for years to come. Oh but my publicity! Its terrifying. An hours bombardment at every port. I made the mistake of accepting invitation. I found myself on a platform with the whole university round me. They began shouting we want Bernard Shaw — so I told them that every young man at 21 must be a revolutionary. After that of course the police imprisoned them by dozens.

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I want to write an article for the Herald pointing out what Dickens said years ago about the folly of Parliament. Oh I could only stand the voyage by writing. I've written 3 or 4 books. I like to give the public full weight. Books should be sold by the pound. What a nice little dog. But aren't I keeping you & making you cold (touching my arm). Two men stopped along the path to look. Off he strode again on his dwindled legs. I said Shaw likes us. L. thinks he likes nobody. What will they think of Shaw in 50 years? He is 76 he said: too old for the tropics.

Last night — to relieve myself for a moment from concerning that silly book Flush, — oh what a waste of time — I will record Bruno Walter. He is a swarthy, fattish, man; not at all smart. Not at all the 'great conductor'. He is a little Slav, a little semitic. He is very nearly mad; & that is, he cant get 'the poison' as he called it of Hitler out of him. "You must not think of the Jews" he kept on saying "You must think of this awful reign of intolerance. You must think of the whole state of the world. It is terrible — terrible. That this meanness, that this pettiness, should be possible! Our Germany — which I loved — with our tradition — our culture — We are now a disgrace". Then he told us how you cant talk above a whisper. There are spies everywhere. He had to sit in the window of his hotel in Leipzig? a whole day,

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telephoning. All the time soldiers were marching. They
never stop marching. And so it is on the wireless,
between the turns, they play military music.
Horrible horrible! He hopes for the monarchy
as the only hope. He will never go back there.
His orchestra had been in existence for 150 years.
but [illegible] the spirit of the whole thing is awful.
We must band together. We must refuse to meet
any German. We must say that they are
uncivilized. We will not trade with them or
play with them. We must make them feel
themselves outcasts — not by fighting them;
by ignoring them. Then he swept off to
music. He has the melody — genius? — which
makes him live every thing he feels. Described
conducting: must know every player.

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(1)

Juan les Pins
9th May 1933

Yes. I thought: I will make a note of that face — the
face of the woman stitching a very thin, lustrous
green silk at a table in the restaurant where we
lunched at Vienne. She was like fate —
a consummate mistress of all the arts of
self preservation: hair rolled & lustrous; eyes so
nonchalant: nothing could startle her; there she sat
stitching her green silk with people going & coming
all the time; she not looking, yet knowing, fearing
nothing, expecting nothing — a perfectly equipped
middle class French woman.

At Carpentras last night there was the little servant
girl with hunted eyes, hair brushed in a slop, & one
rather black tooth. I felt that life would
crush her out inevitably. Perhaps 18, not more;
yet on the wheel, without hope; poor, not weak
but mastered — yet not enough mastered but to
desire furiously travel, for a moment, a car.
Ah but I am not rich she said to me — which
her cheap little stockings & shoes showed anyhow

2.)

Oh how I envy you – able to travel. You like Carpentras? But the wind blows ever so hard. You'll come again? That's the bell ringing. Never mind. Come over here & look at this. No, I've never seen anything like it. Ah yes. She always likes the English (She was the other maid, with hair like some cactus in erection) Yes I always like the English she said. She odd little honest face, with the black tooth, will stay on at Carpentras & suffer: will marry! will become one of those stout black women who sit in the door knitting? No: I foretell for her some tragedy, because she had enough mind to envy us the Lanchester.

3/ 1st May. Rapallo.

Yesterday there was Miss Cotton. She is one of the army of spinsters, on half & quarter-pay. She finds she can live at Grand Marina for 8/- a day. Her friends say But what is there to do? She says. Oh there are the beauties of nature. She went out, directly. She came in to dinner, dressed in greenish dressing gown: by her side the dour Miss Thread. How was France? was it cheap? Oh Miss Debenly? shall here. Then she described the wife the husband, & the mis: & the servants; & how there had once been an Earthquake. Meanwhile came in the 2 Jews in evening dress, the deaf lady & the voluble; also the powdered white lady with the red daughter: & after dinner — they often gave us asparagus, she said — & they had their own bottles of wine — the two parties settled in at their own tables — where they are now & played bridge. Now this twittery spinster will dwindle on, beside the sea under the mountain, & chattering, till she dies

4 So we don't like the French Riviera, & the Italian much, but it'll have to be. Rapallo clever at best: its bay stitched with gold silk this evening. humming stucco villas; all mauve blossom - stout women leading children. white boats, high cliffs; a sauntering indolent luxurious evening place, where we regret spending our last evening; grown old.

But we don't like these villas - like the Brings - set laid like eggs on ledges. So that you can't go up or down but meet moody sots; & forever behold the sea; the roof of the Casino. Dorothy & Janie taking their coffee like ladies in a perfectly neat, shaved, yellow room with a large laurel tree outside; - the tree Dorothy & Simon planted 30 years ago. But we dont wish to live here, threading out our days, in these sealed villas, sauntering round the harbour.

57) May 12th Pisa.

Yes Shelley chose better than Max Beerbohm. He chose a harbour; a bay; & his home, with a balcony, on which Mary stood looking out across the sea. ~~[illegible]~~ Hoping sailed boats were coming in the morning — a windy little town. Of high pink & yellow Southern houses, not much changed I suppose: very full of the breaking of waves, very much open to the sea; & his rather desolate house standing with the sea just in front. Shelley, I suppose, bathed, walked sat on the beach there; & Mary & Mrs Williams had their coffee on the balcony. I daresay the clothes & the people were much the same. At any rate, a very good great man's house in its way. What is the word for full of the sea? Can't think to-night. They slept in a bedroom at the Nettuno in Pisa, much occupied by French tourists. The Arno swimming past with the usual coffee coloured foam. Walked in the Cloisters: this is true Italy, with the old dusty smell: people swarming in the streets; under the — what is the word

6) for – I think the word for a street that has pillars is arcade. Shelleys house waiting by the sea. – Shelley not coming. – Mary & Mrs Williams watching from the balcony & then Trelawney coming from Pisa. – burning the body on the shore – thats in my mind. All the colours here are white blueish marble against a very light saturated sky. The tower leaning prodigiously. And Clerical beggar at the door in a mock fantastic leather hat. The clergy walking. It was in these cloisters – Campo Santo – that L. & I walked 21 years ago & met the Palgraves & I tried to hide behind the pillars. And now we come in ours Car: & the Palgraves – are they dead, or very old? Now at any rate we have left the black country. The bald necked vulture country with its sprinkling of redroofed villas. This is the Italy one used to visit in a railway train with Violet Dickinson – taking the hotel bus.

13th May Saturday Siena.

Today we saw the most beautiful of views & the melancholy man. The view was like in lines of poetry that makes itself: the flushed hills, all flushed with reds & greens: the elongated lines, cultivated every inch; old, wild, perfectly said, once & for all: & I walked up to a peasant & said What is that village? It's called [blank] ; & the woman with the blue eyes said Won't you come to my house & drink. She was famished for talk. Four or five of them hugged round us, & I made a Ciceronian speech, about the beauty of the country. But I have no money to travel with, she said, wringing her hands. We would not go to her house — a cottage on the side of the hill. ~~but~~ & shook hands: hers were dusty: she wanted to keep them from me; but we all shook hands, & I wished we had gone to her house, in the loneliest of all landscapes. Then, lunching by the river among the ants, we met the melancholy man. He had gone in

8) six little fish in his hands, which he had caught in his hand. We said Siena very beautiful country; & he said no, he preferred the town. He had been to Florence: no, he did not like the country. He wanted to travel, but had no money: worked at some village: no he did not like the country. he repeated, with his gentle cultivated voice: no theatre, no pictures, only perfect beauty. I gave him 2 cigarettes: at first he refused, then offered us his 6 or 7 little fish. But we could not cook them at Siena, we said. No, he agreed; & so we parted.

This is always rush. saying one must write notes. Portraiture is a very difficult art. That is one has always to select: & I am too sleepy. — Hence merely run sand through my fingers. Writing is not in the least an easy art. Thinking what to write, it seems easy; but the thought evaporates, runs hither & thither. Here we are in the noise of Siena — the vast tunnelled arched stone town, swarmed over by chattering shrieking children.

9. May 14th

Yes I am reading—skipping—the Sacred Fount—about the most inappropriate of all books for this din—sitting by the open window, looking across heads & heads & heads—all Siena parading in gray & pink & the cars hooting. How finely run along those convoluted threads? I dont—thats the answer. I let em break. I only mark that the sign of a masterly writer is his power to break his mould cultivated. None of HJ's twisted metaphors have the vigour, even though then their senilities, to smart it. He has some native juice—figure: has driven his thorn deep into some stew of his own—some swarming mixture. That—his vitality—his vernacular—his poems & grip & giving always spring fresh upon me. & at the same time I ask how could anyone, outside an orchid in a greenhouse, fabricate such an arched dream! Oh these Edwardian ladies with hats ham, these tailored; "my dear men"!

10. Get compared to that vulgar old brute Creevey — L. is here bitten by a flea N.J. a muscular, hair; No doubt the Society of the Regent — the smell of brandy & horse, the painted velvet Laurence women — the general luxury & lustiness & vulgarity are here at their superlative. Of course the Shelleys, the Wordsworths, the Coleridges seated on the other side of the hedge — But when it comes fuming out of Creevey's page, it's for all the world like — something between Buckingham Palace, Brighton; & the Queens own stable style — so uncurbed, so weak: & how can one hope for a cure for a single person? There's all the dreary Lords & Ladies ogling & over eating; & plush & gilt; & the Princess & the Prince — I think the dissolution & obesity taking hold of the 18th century & swelling it into a full half efflorescence. 1860 is considerably more to the point.

11 15th May.

This should be all description — I mean of the little pointed green hills: & the white oxen, & the poplars, & the cypresses, & the sculptured naked, intensely musical, fleshed green land from here to Albazia — that is where we went today; & couldn't find it, & asked one after another of the charming tired peasants; but none had been 4 miles beyond their range, until we came to the stone breaker, & he knew. He couldn't stop work to come with us, because the inspector was coming tomorrow. And he was alone, alone, all day with no one to talk to. So was the aged Marea at the Albazio. And she mumbled & stopped her words, as she showed us into the huge bare stone building: mumbled & mumbled, about the English — how beautiful they were. Are you a Contessa? she asked me. But she didn't like Italian country either. They seem stunted, dried up: like grasshoppers, & with

the manners of impoverished gentle people: sad, wise, tolerant, humorous. There was the man with the mule — he let the mule gallop away down the road. We are welcome because we might talk: they draw round & discuss us after we've gone. Crowds of gentle kindly boys & girls always come about us, & wave & touch their hats. And nobody looks at the view — except us — at the Ensanean, bone white, thin evening: then there's a ruddy red farm or two; & light islands swimming here & there in the sea of shadow — for it was very showery — then there are the black shapes of cypresses round the farm; like fur edges; & the poplars, & the streams & the nightingales singing & sudden gusts of orange blossom: & white alabaster again. with swinging chains — great slaps of white leather hanging under their noses — & infinite surfaces emptiness, loneliness, silence: never a new house, or a village; but only the

13 vineyards & the olive trees, where they have always been. The hills go pale & blue, washed very sharp & soft on the sky: hill after hill;

14. 19th May. Piacenza.

It's a queer thing that I write a date. Perhaps in this disconnected life one thinks, if I can say what day it is, then ... Three dots to signify I don't know what I mean. That we have been driving all day from Lerici over the Apennines, & are now cold, cloistral, highly uncomfortable in a vast galleried Italian Inn, so ill provided with chairs that now at this present moment we are squatted, L. on a hard chair by his bed, I on the bed, in order to take advantage of the single light which burns between us. L. is writing directions to the Press. I am about to read Goldoni.

Lerici is hot & blue & we had a room with a balcony. There were Miss & Mother-Meres who had lost all chance of life long ago, & would wish a gentle

15. form. a form of mild sadness, confront a whole meal – arranged for the English – in Anteri silence, dream of of the cold Sunday supper in Wimbledon. Then there the retired Anglo-Indian, who takes Thrale one day Miss Tontchot for a walk, a breezy red faced man, very fond of Evensong at the Abbey. The Jan to the Temple: where 'my brother' has rooms. Et cetera Et cetera.

of the Apennines I have nothing to say – save that up on the top they're like the inside of a green umbrella: & some after spire. Clouds caught on the point of the stick. And so down to Parma; hot. strong, noisy: with those that don't keep maps: so on along a weary road to Piacenza. at which we find ourselves now at 5 minutes to 9. P.M. Then of course in the rut of travelling – there is the price paid for the sweep & the freedom – the dinkey of our shoes a careering of tomorrow – & eating our lunch on a green plot beside a deep cold stream. It will all be over this day week — comfort – discomfort: & the zest & such that no engagements. home. habits of live. Then we shall take them up again with more than the zest of travelling

16 To want to keep off sleep - that is the effort
mission of tonight - longest sitting at the open
window of a belvedere seen in Draguignan - with
plane trees outside. The usual people noted best,
the usual loudspeaker. Everybody in France
motors on Sunday. Then sleep is had at night
The hotel keepers are pressed, & scarcely stop playing
Cards. But Grasse even two ~~[illegible]~~ telephone -
We came in here late. We leave here early.
I dip into Creevey. & into Golden Bough - the
long hot bed. This is the tax for travelling -
then sleeping in uncomfortable hotel night - sitting in
hard chairs under the lamp. Start the seduction
works as we start - to Aix tomorrow - so
home - And 'home' becomes a magnet,
for I cant stop making up the P's - cant live
without that unimportant - though this is
the loveliest & most distracting alternative.
that I'm full of holiday - & want work -
Ungrateful that I am! - & yet I want the hills near Siena -
hills near Fabbrica too, & the
but no other hills - not these black & green
violent monotonous Southern hills - We
saw poor Lawrence's Phoenix hacked out in
Coloured pebbles at Vence today. take
away all the frilled tombs.

23rd May

I have just said to myself if it were possible to
write, those white sheets would be the very
thing, not too large or too small. But I
do not wish to write, except as an irritant.
This is the position: I sit on L's bed: he in the
only arm chair. People tap up & down on
the pavement. This is Vienne. It is
roasting hot — hotter & hotter itself — & we
are driving through France: & its Tuesday & we
cross on Friday & this strange interval of
travel of sweeping away from habitations —
habits will be over. On & on we go — through
Aix, through Avignon, on & on, under arches of
leaves, over bare sandy roads, under grey
black bulls under castles, beside vines: & I'm
thinking of the Pargiters: & L. is driving: & when
we come to poplars, we get out & lunch
by the river: & then on: & take a cup of tea
by the river. Fetch our letters, learn that
Lady Cynthia Mosley is dead: picture the
scene: wonder at death: & drowse & doze
in the heat, & decide to sleep here — Hotel
de la Poste; & read another letter, & learn
that the Book Society will probably

take flesh: & speculate what we shall do if we have £1,000 or £2,000 to spend. And what would these little burghers of Vienne, who are drinking & coffee do, with that sum, I ask? The girl is a typist: the young men clerks. For some reason they start discussing hotels at Lyons I think: & they harvest a penny piece between them: & all the men go into the urinal, one sees their legs: & the Morocco soldiers go in their peat cloaks: & the children play ball. & people stand lounging. & everything becomes highly pictorial, composed. legs in particular — the odd angles they make. & the people dining in the hotel; & the green air it all has, since we shall leave early tomorrow. & something designing Vienne on my mind, English-cantly.
~~which~~ Now the dream glooms. & freedom: no packing tells on us — oh to return an arm chair; & read & not to have to ask for Eau Minerale with which to brush our teeth!

Tuesday May 30th

52 Tavistock Square

Of all things coming home from a holiday is undoubtedly the most damned. Never was there such aimlessness, such depression. Cant read, write or think. Theres no climax here. Comfort yes: but the coffee's not so good as I expected. And my brain is extinct—literally hasnt the power to lift a pen. What one must do is to set it—my machine I mean—on the rails & give it a push. Lord—how I pushed yesterday to make it start running along Goldsmith again. Theres that half finished article. Lord Salisbury said something about dished up speeches being like the cold remains of last nights supper. I see white grease on the pages of my article. Today its a little warmer—tepid meat: Its coldish, reddish a slab of cold mutton. & how long? but I hear the clock tick. that the wheels I suspect, though I mustnt look, are just beginning to turn on the rails. We go to Monks House for Whitsun, which is diminished Monday—the suburban, the look at the Monks House. No. I cant. Its an empty snail shell. And I'm Perplexed. Never mind simply into a cold slab of a brain. I shall dive head foremost into the Pargiters. And now I shall make my mind run along Goldoni. A Italian—whats his name—Jew reader I think. It occurs to me that the state, my depressed state, is the state in which most people usually are.

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31st May

And I am at once called out to draw lots in our Derby sweepstake. No favourite this year they say.

I think I have now got to the point where I can write for 4 months straight ahead at the Pargiters. Oh the relief—the physical relief! I feel as if I'd hardly any longer keep back—that my brain is being tortured by always battling against a blank wall—I mean Flush, Goldsmith, motoring through Italy: now, tomorrow, I mean to run it off. And suppose only nonsense comes? The thing is to be venturous, bold, to take every fence. One might introduce plays, poems, letters, dialogues: must get the round, not only the flat. Not the theory only. And conversation: argument. How to do that will be one of the problems. I mean intellectual argument in the form of art: I mean how give ordinary waking Arnold Bennett life the form of art? These are rich hard problems for my 4 months ahead. And I don't know my own gifts at the moment. I'm disoriented completely after 4 weeks holiday—no 3—but tomorrow we go to Rodmell again. And I must fill up the chinks with reading—& don't want to settle down to books—now I have to go up to Murray about my dress: & then Ethel round the corner: but no letters: dim generation from Lichtsein again. I thought, driving back from Richmond last night, something very profound about the synthesis of my being: how only writing composes it: how nothing makes a whole unless I am writing: now I have forgotten what seemed so profound. The rhododendrons like coloured glass at Kew, on the agitation, on the discomfort of this mood

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very well: the old Pargiters are beginning to run off: & I say
ought to be done. I mean, writing is effort: writing is
despair: & yet as I came t'other day in the grilling
heat at Rodmell, I admit that the perfect vision—
that I think was something like my profound
thought at Richmond—steps into folly, word
ex: the proportion is right; that I at the top
rather strain, suffer, as this morning going
Despair: shall I Lord when it comes to
re-writing, suffer an intensity of anguish
ineffable (the word only means that one cant
express) it; holding the thing—all the thing—
the innumerable things—together.
We want 'the proportion'—I'm amazed to
compare the thing done with this never
oddly—& went to Leonard's tea, where I saw
Nelly Cecil—she escaped—flying old white
attenuated: I couldn't summon force to
stop her. And she vanished. Violet was in
the offing. Go to tea in a stable with
Mrs Woolf, Sylvia buying fripperies because
theres nothing else to do; & Edgar glum,
gloomy. solemn.

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Tuesday
13th June

Apostle dinner last night Masson on Goldie. Adrian dined with me: wine: peach fed ham: Karin with inflamed eye from tattoo: Kapp: wine: Logan: in corner Hope: lost her neck. grown blubbery waxy but affable. talk of lunch to Ott: Would she like it? Yes they say. mention Pipsy. And what's happening to Nan Warmington? Husband found dead in bed. And Ka. And Lottie. And Mrs Hope is Mellington has inherited a fortune. Chancery opens once in 50 years. And so on: like birds, very garrulous. She has a black dachshund on Hope's knee. Has a snuffy screech Mary to call it by. Logan's malice. His version of John & the Bren. Resolved: to make Logan pay further. L. comes in. Says he must go again round to James. On with our stories: father; childhood. Was he utterly bad? Had friend, A. Day. Cruel, says Hope. making me walk.

I am in full flood with P: rather thinks it tends to a play: anyhow am floated. L. depressed. partly because of Shaw lunch. because of Pinka's eczema: people — Bang: & Bowen tomorrow, Sharon, Bunny, Camargo: & new, instantly B. Hutchinson, to ask a favour. Then what about Hope & Nelly Cecil.

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June 16th Friday

Aurep coming in half an hour — 10-10 — so I can't even pretend to settle down to work. ([illegible] [illegible] finished) Oh yesterday! Oh yesterday!

Figure to yourself lunch on a hot day at the Shaws. Long narrow room overlooking river — white Whitehall buildings. The Bingons. He a plethoric bolt-eyed [illegible] [illegible] man; She, washy watery. Mrs Shaw small gimlet-eyed. Dr. Lomer Shaw, alert for business, but not in the mood. No one in the mood. Lunch in another long narrow room. Unreal hotel lunch. butler. Service kitchen. Shaw's paddle actually out of the water. Calling no car. Had to make a speech to friends of the Nat. Libraries that afternoon; but lacked [illegible]. Didn't know what their object was; but to say something unpleasant about the Conference. And I failed. And I said there is d—d bad. I said it at intervals. Nothing flourished. Every saying ~~[illegible]~~ died as spoken. All I retrieved was: Shaw does not specialise: I think of the sharp key a brain-[illegible]. I feel [illegible] ah. I never see my character. Also, he has been seen in another way. The O.M. Baldwin said founded above the O.M. "I said I have already he'll only [illegible]." [illegible] confound the order of merit on [illegible]" [illegible] China: some he'd [illegible] in [illegible] - [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. Li hand [illegible]. [illegible] about [illegible] his father [illegible], which I share, of anti-climax. Throw them all into the [illegible] bonnes.

Letting — when they wanted to make a new [illegible] a [illegible] [illegible]

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And I kept saying no the drug won't work. Never
once did it work: & we were all glad— Shaw glad—
when Mrs S. whose mild babble is unceasing—
moved; & we never sat down, but had one look
at the room. & Shaw escorted us along the black &
white passage—very jaunty, upright—dear green
Eyes—red face to the left. A man of perfect
poise—spring—agility—never time tenterhooky—
no poet, but what an efficient, adept,
trained arch & darter! His wrist, his
spring at 76 entirely astonishing. And
the hand flung out in gesture. He has the
power to make the word his shape— to me not
a beautiful shape—that's all. So home.
Very hot. Very hot. Had to write a letter for
Mr Fry about opening Squares. At 3.20
Anrep to Otts. Ott in blue & red marlin—
Dazzling carriage. What is it? Our
affection for you Ott: we wish you to know . . .
Oh dear dear, no I couldn't, I couldn't.
Enter P.
Philip. Come & protect me!! I am entirely on the
rather moth eaten.
side. Rubbishly. Too like Jack Squire:
Besides we shall see our friends. And
Clive has done very well without us.
Do you think we are over? And so on—
rather reproachful, rather hurt, rather
genuinely. And Ott. genuinely
on the high horse. And Boris
Kirikins the ceremony— And Boris
genuinely anxious expostulatory,
deliberate & stand— grasping his
hat, making a speech— determined. And

P. raging: rather wretched. Ott has been at Dorothy's
Door (i.e. & we were nervous of her very kind then)
& how, as you dont realise, cant stand any strain:
Oh but we arent suggesting that she should
give more parties — (And you'll never come to
parties she does give. This was sub-acute)
[illegible] you walked up to T. S. with her —
she to have her feet tended — & then B. so that
sad overcame her, kissed her in the street. So
back home. Then the wallet with the
pass to the Pullman cars locked up in the
street. Then Ethel — oh & I was dumb,
completely unsentient, & she tried to
stage a quarrel, & failed — failed, poor old
woman, in all her effort — with the pinks
love — was very unattractive — felt it.
Did I care? No. I could
suffered going. Was dozed. impudent, so
feel nothing. Was dozed.
led her down the stairs. She, perhaps,
perhaps not — & off she
suffering.
went. & I sank at last — at last — into
Helena — For had we not had Barbara
Hutchinson twice, about her lover: had
I not signed books, & gone to tea
with Nelly Cecil, & pricked up my ears
with Lord Bob — & then the dinner
with Bunny — taciturn, monolithic — —
with Eth Bowen, conventional — & so on:
all this I say has been whizzing & buzzing:
& now Boris comes with Maynard's
letter of invitation to the Ott: tea:
whereupon out drops Ott's refusal.
No, no, no, I cant. So thats over.
And now to Rodmell this very hot June day.

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Tuesday 20th June

It's a very ugly thing, a ceremony. I detest them more & more. This refers to my waste of a morning at the WCG Jubilee today. Margaret & Lilian, in grey blue & coffee colour—how characteristic!—presented a banner. M's white hair tied with black bow. Wears them. Their shoulders hunch a little. Otherwise I noted little change. The great hall full. The women all in pinks & blues. Fine old housekeepers: of the Sophie type: massive: determined. Now & then a great laugh: & very queer accents. Miss Jones of Brighton pronounced twenty different ways. But all was ceremony. Margaret Bondfield: Susan Lawrence—& so on: the bigwigs: & they say things that aren't true: they require an on the brink of a new world: they talk of the triumph of Co-opn. That's why I hate ceremonies—not a word that gets—all windblown. Years forlorn, with elementary emotions. Years ago I got something out of the mere conglomeration. Jarrow the multitude. But today I was not annihilated, deafened: I said to myself the P's is more real; fiercer harder, more veined with blood than all this. & longed to be back, working. How odd to spend a morning mostly vacant, discordant!—How many I spend concentrated! Then we shook & smiled with others, relieving emotions not Margaret's & Lilian hands: & found a back way out. extreme: I must now read Wren Weights; a possible East End novel. I am in flood again with the P's.

Monday June 26th

The present moment. 7 o'clock on June 26th: L. printing: hot: thunderous: I after reading Henry 6 pt one saying what, the use of writing: reading, imperfectly, a poem by Leopardi; the present moment, in my studio. A [illegible] bayed in the mews: dog barks: woman, "I didn't know if you were at home" leaves door open: faraway horns: a bee buzzing. Bobo's last night: King opens big stone of London Un. Doctors, scarlet, purple in street: poor little students in gowns: go to dine, & read Archibald Marshall's memoirs; & music: thunder. I dare say L. go to h. opening windows, & go up: the moment done.

Thursday July 6th

Dinner at Rogers yesterday. Company S. Sitwell, Brennan, Oliver. All sat round about in Helen's bedroom, eating cold things off a table. Next Georgia & Roger. Talk of patent medicine. "And then I found these an aphrodisiac" G. says. He takes buys every patent medicine. by way of sedative. Bound. abound. hallows days an bacon: brown chocolate eyed; vital as things are not intellectual. Made the salad with cheese. Mrs B. said to be sympathetic & soft & amusing by L. The Quennells: I in my desire not to be cranky perhaps too friendly. Francis Birrell all chatter. Stayed late. Not much satisfaction—yet amusing enough, as such things are: Helens Ren points; Roger reading French poetry

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to Mrs G. & Flora. "Flora" says Helen, with doubly "has fallen in love with Dudvill. Caught her sopping at breakfast. "My maid is going to have a child. Nonsense Flora. Well to tell the truth I'm headlong in love — so I be. Lady blinking, clumsy, molecule, attractive, always jerking from thigh to leg. Knows nothing. Thats what lies behind the aphrodisiac, & the Rouna Duffian.

Also to tea with Joyce — a rolled mound in pink pyjamas: elegant tender, whiteboned, pure eau de cologne: also Joyce Show: also — now to the London Library meeting Two days glancing writing Goldsmith, forced rests from Pargiters.

Friday July 7th

Being headachy after Pargiters. Goldsmith & Even so many people I have spent the whole morning reading old diaries. & am now (10 to 1) much refreshed. There is big way of justifying these many written books. And we have a party tonight — Wests, Hutchinsons, Flora — so I need rest my head. The diary amuses me.

Monday July 10th

Bella arrived & knocked her head upon the window of the car. She cut her nose & was dazed. And then I was in "one of my states" — how violent how acute & walked in Regents Park in black misery & had to summon my cohorts in the old way to see me through. which they have done more or less. A

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note made to testify to my own ups & downs: many
of which go unrecorded though they are less
violent I think than they used to be. But how
familiar it was — stamping along the road,
with gloom & pain constricting my heart: &
the desire for death, in the old way, all
for two, I daresay careless words.
It seems possible that Tom has finally
deserted Vivienne. Jack Hutch. came to our
frosty sticky party, with the multi-coloured Vita
blooded cultivated Andrews — Rebecca merely
a hard painted woman. That night, living
in roguery — & Hutch. told us how V.
has heard by cable that Tom sailed on
26th & he has not arrived. She has lain in bed, with
today worked herself into frenzy — telephoned to Faber — L's
a name; & then Jack telephoned mysteriously that they
idea — & they say mysteriously that they
cannot discuss the matter on the telephone,
but if V. will hold herself together she will
realise that there is no reason for anxiety.
This we interpret to mean that Tom is back;
has told Faber that he is parting from her;
but this kept secret, until he gives leave —
which he may do today. Anyhow, V. is
clearly concealing something. I read one
of Toms last letters, December it was, a very
cold & brutal document, saying that
he has made no money. I thought
except that after his 6 months
absence he has decided to make the
break here. has warned V. & provided
for her. But she shuts the letters in the
cupboard with the sealed string. L. is
made her executor. So I go up to lunch to hear.

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20th July.

This was partly a correct statement of the Eliot position. He has left her "irrevocably"; & she sits meanwhile in a flat decorated with pictures, shrines, & altars, & flowers. Sometimes she prevails on a stranger like E. Bowen to believe her story, at other times lapses into sense. We dine with the Hutchinsons tonight, & that I expect found some sort of Vivienne fund. It is said that there is a Convent next door to M. in which she might pass her days, praying for Tom.

I am again in full flood with the Ps. after a week of very scanty pages. The trouble is to get the meat pressed in: I mean to keep the rhythm & convey the meaning. It tends more, I think — at any rate the E. M. scenes — to Drama. I think the next lap ought to be objective, realistic, in the manner of Jane Austen: carrying the story on all the time. Vita dines. Nigel has appendicitis: Vita that night had slightly painted her lips, but unskilfully. Now why?

Friday 21st July

Dinner at the Hutchinsons last night: in the garden, though there might have been a shower. Very cloudy, sultry & completely still. The white Cat came out & played about. Mary in white, like a mummy; with a yellow turban, hanging down: chalk white face, like a pierrot. I said I would put her in the Pargiters. She might come in in the last scene. or going to a party. Like a white [illegible] stone. We were much more natural & easy than usual. Lobster & cutlets in aspic. We talked of the Eliots a little: then of B. & Victor: how both Desmond & I said he was

Lady Jockey too

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gallows. Then the lights began to flicker on the faces of the houses & on the trees. Mary became rather restless. Said would we like to go to the Zoo. We might meet people there, she said. She wanted to go. Jack not much, nor I not much. But we went. And we met Simon & two Frenchmen, Massine the ballet maker, in the reptile house. Mary twined the heavy scaly pythons round her: they have bright electric blue bloom on them. They feel like muscles moving under a thing plated skin: I took one, it wound itself round her head like a toque, sticking its head out & flicking its tongue at the side. Go to the white bear. The ~~polar~~ sea bears; & looked at the brilliant green showering trees. with sleepy birds pecking about on the glass.

Vivi: E. said of the scene with Tom at the solicitors: he sat near me & I held his hand, but he never looked at me.

"It's not a poet, no; so what else is he to do"... That is poetry Maggie in its pre-natal stage: before it has taken wings to itself & flown to the —" She paused at the bookcase, & took down, the Antigone, translated by Edward Pargiter.. to the utmost

~~Created here~~ by mistake — damn.

July 26th

Mrs Cartwright & L. doing books — '£9 here & 500 sheets'? & I very sleepy after dining with Julia: having tea with E Bowen in the heat — the great heat. Another unbroken wave. When I can't write of a morning — as now — I try to tune myself on other books: couldn't settle on any. Dare I Hardy's life just now. Rather to my liking. He was unreasonable about critics, so that pale cold Charles Morgan

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rags. And he felt bitter about the treatment of working men at Oxford; hence Jude. "The Marriconette"
L. is reading out to Mrs Cashin. Quentin has mild pleurisy: Nessa gone down to Charleston; finds Raymond there: at Julias Carlingot Wogan,
"I think you might remainder 50 of M. L."
Dorothy Bussy, Peter Quennell: whom I dont warm to — exiguous worm, rather: skinned: clever: cleverer than Wogan, who's nicer than Peter
Talk of Memoir Club. "But a very autobiography would be too dirty" said P.Q. They said — the young — that they had no group.
Talk about Ann & Judith: Q said he deprecated Amazons. Said liked them till 20 or so.
Q. I think is in trouble, so I guess, with his doll of a wife: "marriage —" spoken very bitterly. Told me of a visit to Plaistow to correct proofs with Desmond. Coming back in the rattling train, D said to him, how someone, (he thought Molly) had proposed to him, being a "a good deal more in love than he was" & they always feel the claws in their heart to their day! Odd instance of D's spasmodic intimacy. Shd could finish my

A good shot. He left her, & she him, soon afterwards)

Goldsmith: read it all. I must.
A great many visits: Mrs Porter, James Stephen, halfwitted oaf, on business about Wilberforce, designed to push him on. Got out of meeting Low, at Kingsley Martins, of the Maloney, American editor of the Feis's. To-morrow we go to Monks House tomorrow, & shall write: yes: the P's must be dealt with in masterly manner. An exciting book to write.

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Sunday 30th July

Rodmell

Settled in again here. A question how far places influence one's mood. Certain thoughts I always think. The downs spoilt could be more. ie. leading to a well known round. Quentin ill with pleurisy—may have to have an operation—they the first illness at Charleston. We dine there tonight. And, in order to refresh my mind for Ps. I've been writing memoirs. & cant disinfect my mind of Fitzgerald. so strong is the past— to so as to read Italian. I'm telling the story of Mrs H. & H. G. But I am organising life here, & so far rather well. Reading—walking & swimming into lucid depths, powerfully—thats how I put it. And people impend, but can be shelved for the moment—Colefax, Elr Read, Julia, the wolves in ..

Mrs B's case is interesting. It reflects credit on humanity. Her half cousin Lydia Hartie, a mad wandering witted old woman died in Florence, left 17,000: half to Mrs B. This represents safely indeed luxury for life. Now we come down & are given all the lawyers letters. Signora Colli who looked after the dying demented Hartie Harlen letter to Mr Duncan in Aberdeen a solicitor, very interesting: & her perpetual mastery of Josephine. Macaulay i soon—then Colli writes that she had expected And so would certainly £ a year.

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have gone, had Mrs H. signed a codicil. P. & Mrs B
say they will offer her £50 p.a. & the other
legatees will do the same. She is not
grasping, Mrs Colli accounts for every penny,
& Dr Potts is humane; & the B's full of sense
& restraint — more than I, had I suddenly
one thousand. ~~without working~~ These
little tributes to human nature are deserved
after Hitler & Mussolini — about whom Mrs
Nash often wrote. I figure her perpetually
arranging her blue & gold tea set, her
fathers watch, the bonbon box, & the card
box made of the Fern oak in Windsor
"which was mentioned in Shakespeare" & in
the house in Florence, where she lived
with Colli aged 76.

Aug. 8th Since we came here I have been twice to
Charleston; seen the Keyneses; been to Worthing;
had Q. to Read (a nice shrewd hard girl with
a bubble mind) to tea; the Easdales &
Norman Stewart (a clever, good fellow, Scarlet)
to tea; expect Mrs Nef at 3 to discuss her
scandalous memoirs: we go to London
Friday & Ethel comes on Sunday. Is this peace?
I'm heavy headed today — its been so hot;
& I have read Mrs Nef from 10 to 12.20.
Scandals about USA: lots are Women's
Secrecy. I imagine a pretty youngish
jumpy intellectual-fashionable American,
completely disoriented; writes rather well;
interesting; but all at sea.

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Saturday
12th Aug:

So naturally after Mrs Nef I was so tired — I thinned
& shook — I went to bed for 2 days & slept & hearing
horns, visiting the usual realms again. Why
strikes me — what are these sudden fits of
complete exhaustion? I come in here to write:
cant even finish a sentence; & am pulled under:
now is this some odd effort; the sub-conscious
pulling me down into her? I've been reading
Faber on Newman; compared his account of a
nervous breakdown: the refusal of some
part of the mechanism; is that what happens to me?
Not quite. Because I'm not evading anything.
I long to write the Pargiters. No. I think
the effort to live in 2 spheres: the novel;
& life is ~~[illegible]~~ a strain: Nefs' almost
break me, because they strain me so far from
the other world: I only want walking &
perfectly spontaneous childish life with
L. & the accustomed when I'm writing
at full tilt: to have to behave with
circumspection & decision to
strangers wrenches me into another
region: hence the collapse.
Still, Saturday. I cant focus: am
disoriented; shaky — physically tired,
but quite calm: the dear old
repetitions soothe me again:
L. perhaps; dinner; tea; papers; music:
I have a dread of reviews; people: in case
this is an anticipation — but what I dread is
the wrench to another sphere.

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Wednesday Aug. 16th

And owing to Sir Alan Cobham's flying, & Angelica & Julian, & fetching the boat I had another headache, & bed, & didnt see Ethel, but heard her voice & have 6 pages altered, subject this morning, & dictated the Lowell, & muddling about the P's & I am out here again, thinking Oh Lord how am I ever going to pull all that into shape!! What a tremendous struggle it'll be! Never mind. I want to discuss Form, having been reading Turgenev. (but how my hand trembles after one of these headaches — cant lay hands on words or pens exactly — the habit has been broken)

Dostoevsky

Form then, is the sense that one thing follows another rightly. This is partly logic. T. wrote & re-wrote. To clean the truth of the unessential. But then D. would say that everything matters. But one cant read D. again. Now Shre. was constrained in form by the stage (T. says one must find a new form for the old subject: but here, I suppose, uses the word differently —) The essential thing in a scene is to be preserved. How do you know what that is? How do we know if the D. form is better or worse than the T. It seems less permanent. T.s idea that the writer states the essential & lets the reader do the rest. D. to supply the reader with every possible help & suggestion. T. reduces the possibilities.

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The difficulty about criticism is that it is so superficial. The writer has gone so much deeper. T. keeps a diary for Bazarov: sorts everything from his point of view. We have only 250 short pages. Our criticism is only a bird's eye view of the pinnacle of an iceberg. The rest under water. One might begin in that way. The article might be more broken, less composed than usual.

Thursday Aug. 24th

~~Ch. ing. Oxfor~~

A week ago, on Friday to be precise, having got my mind again, I dipped into the Pargiters, & determined to recast it save of accumulating more flesh before going on. I am rearranging too, all the first scenes, so as to bring it together. The death happens in the first chapter now. I think I shall reduce the size by half; this however is rather hard & jerky at present. Moreover this is rather a rush & a strain. I have just killed Mrs P: & cant shoot ahead to Oxford. For the truth is these little scenes embroil one, just as in life; & one cant switch off to a different mood all in a second. It seems to me that the realism of the beginning is complete. I have a good eye & ear for pointing in the second part, if I can take it. Rather an interesting experiment — if I could see the same thing from two different views

And now I have spent the morning reading the Confessions of Arsene Houssaye left how jilted by Clive. What a vast

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feasibility of pleasure books hold for me! I went in & found the table laden with books. I looked in — sniffed them all. I could not resist carrying this one off & broaching it. I think I could happily live here & read for ever.

This time, we have many interruptions. Yesterday after knocking against a wild Alsatian that ran into the car — we gave him a great bang — he lay squirming — dead, I thought, then rolled up & went galloping over the field, unhurt. Maybe he broke our lamp & bent the mud guard — after this unpleasant shock, Clive came & Julian & Frances Marshall. Clive said only one thing to hurt me — how I could not take a beating at a game. That was a feeble attack, compared with what he can do in that line. Otherwise we were affable enough; & played bowls; & Fanny asked us to Ham Spray, where we may go, if we make our Western tour. Still, we see too many people, to my view: the Kingsley Martins, who are to me mentally & physically unattractive people the sort of people George Trevelyan would have liked 25 years ago: this struck me, for their views are 'right', & she is ugly K. eats so strongly Earnest plain sloppily. And they force themselves upon us. Into the bargain, I have heard from Tom: & from Peter. Tom is all attention & jokes & pricks. A defence. One of these days

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perhaps he'll give up the trick, with marriage, or perhaps religion. All the same, our quiet days, in between times, are equally balanced, full of peace, & possibilities. How happy, when people go, to sit over dinner, & sit alone, & go to bed in my airy room, where the rising sun & the apples & asparagus wake me, if I leave the curtain open. I am reading Turgenev, with a view to an article; for I intend to shear the arduous sections of the P's with serene criticism. That keeps me in reading while I think fiction. A happy day today without visitors: Hugh Jones & the Cartwrights, alas, tomorrow.

Sunday 27th

The Cartwrights weren't so bad after all. Theirs a bit of a grind — two gawky girls & Hugh, a schoolboy, in with a cat worked on his coat pocket. The girls squeaked & tittered; too genteel over their tea, which they devoured. I had had the forethought to buy sugar cakes in Lewes, where we had to go in the morning, to take Martin's man back; for he had brought the car, refurbished from the Alsatian. And my typewriter ribbon had gone wrong. So we went in & found Lewes in festival — the Corporation fidgetting about on a doorstep covered with dark red: the local tradesmen habited in blue robes with their staffs of office. Because the Woolfs were arriving, in their Economy

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march to Arundel. We ran into them: dusty men
in shirt sleeves, marching, with the flaps of their caps
let down over their necks. It was so hot. The
natives of Lewes stood at the bottom of Station
Street waving handkerchiefs, bobbing their
umbrellas up & down. Not an inspiring
sight — the British army; & I disliked
the credulous fat faced old women who
had been dabbing their handkerchiefs in the
air. But the Cartwrights had their cakes,
& we played bowls. They are all 3 becoming
scientists, possibly scientific chemists,
science, they say being the most popular
subject now, though they are doubtful about jobs.
Now & again Hugh reminded me of Philip. The
same green blue prominent eyes. & I thought
that I detected perhaps a finer grain in him
than in the others — But [illegible] their:
they were nice, simple, shy; why did they
come, I wondered? Was it Mr C.'s Mr J.'s
visit? We drove them over to the
Sea Hotel on the front at Seaford, & I
saw seaside life going on. And they
seemed very young & unfitted — I mean,
the average, not the exception. They bathe,
without running down the steps of the sea
hotel into the sea. A sort of beauty too.
Not that I liked the couple in evening
dress who passed. The man wearing a
fur coat. Why dress for dinner? To
show your social standing? Home,
& Tarring Neville looked very lovely.
And I forgot to say that Flush has been chosen by
the American Book Society
Lord!

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Wednesday
Aug 30th.

And two days ago, sitting in the garden at Charleston, Clive in his queer jerky way said he had very bad news of Francis Birrell & brought out a letter from Raymond. F. has a tumour on his brain & is to be operated on, perhaps, today. So all night I dreamt of him, my dream giving me, as my dreams often do, the essence of a relationship what in real life would never find expression. I remember sitting beside him on a sofa, & how we kissed, kissed, as friends: though in my dream I do not think that I knew he was ill. I am rather haunted by it. Think of waiting all yesterday for an operation which may well be fatal. What should I have felt had I been him? And why was I not him? The sense of friends dying is a very terrible one.

Yesterday there was hot, baking hot: & Robson Campbell Douglas came, 10.30: "Call me Willie" he said at 5: 2.30. Vita came; Mr Neil Lyons at 6 ¾ strolled in from the road to beg bay leaves for his pickled herrings, & a sprig of thyme since he inherits kindly of being a water diviner. Vita stayed the night; we had goose for dinner. She spent the morning talking to me: & Mary Hutchinson has just rung up to suggest a visit. Tomorrow we go to London.

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Saturday Sept 2nd.

with that usual dread of asking for news on the telephone. I rang up Raymond on Thursday & heard to my extreme relief that F.'s case is not so bad nearly as he assumed. The growth is small, superficial on the outside, & there seems no reason why he should not recover. I seemed to see him hauled up into the air again as R. spoke. The operation is next week. Curious how all ones fibres seem to expand & fill with air when anxiety is taken off: curious also to me the intensity of my own feelings: I think imagination, the picture making power, decks up feelings with all kinds of scenes: so that one goes on thinking, instead of localising the event. all very mysterious. But as soon as I expanded, I felt very fond of that dear old rattling milk lorry: & hoped he would see me out, & must bring myself to write to him. Partly selfishness — a gloom, this horror: that it means another extinction of ones own life: brings death nearer. But let us think no more of death. Its life that matters, to quote my quotation from Montaigne.

Suddenly in the night I thought of "Here & Now" as a title for the Pargiters I think it better. It shows what I'm after & does not compete with the Herries saga, the Forsyte saga & so on. I have now done the first part; I mean compressed it,

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shall, I think, compress Eleanor's day. & then
what? The next does not admit of much
compression. I think I have reduced it to
80,000 words perhaps: but it seems to me there
must be another 40, to come. 80 & 40 =
120,00. If so it will be the longest of
my little brood — longer than N. & D. I
imagine.
As Percy says when he brings in the slop
pail: "I'm backing the kettle." "You've
never had such a summer": "As what is
gray": "Its been fine since Christmas." We have studied the
move a bit the car. We have studied these
old ships & sail though these days again.
L. is having the new pond made. The old
one re-planted, & is going to pave the front
garden. Flush, I think with some pleasure,
has made these extravagances possible. We
should net £2,000 from that six
months dogged & dreary grind. What
will people say of that little book
I wonder, without great anxiety. Tom
wrote yesterday, telling me, in his jaunty
uneasy manner to conceal his address, &
the date of his visit. The mystery I
see again flatters him. But we shall
see. deeper into that dark well perhaps.
And I have had 2 blessed days of silence.
& we walked in the marsh today &
saw a drowned sheep, & were glowered
by our 3 dogs. And I have decided
by the way not to accept the Leslie
Stephen Lectureship which has not been

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been offered me. & feel comfortably cool & obscure & anonymous. As Lytton once said, success came to us too late to make us big on our perches. I am reading with extreme greed a book by Vera Brittain, called The Testament of Youth. Not that I much like her. A stringy metallic mind, with I suppose, the sort of taste I should dislike in real life. But her story, told in detail, without reserve, of the war, & how she lost lover & brother, & dabbled her hands in entrails, & was forever seeing the dead, & eating scraps, & sitting five on one WC, runs rapidly, vividly across my eyes. A very good book of its sort. The new sort, the hard anguished sort, that the young write; that I could never write. Nor has anyone written that kind of book before. Why now? What urgency is there on them to stand bare in public? She feels that these facts must be made known, in order to help — what? herself partly I suppose. And she has the social conscience. I have still to read how she married the infinitely dreary Catlin & found beauty & triumph in — poor Gaping Holtby. But I give her credit for having kept up a long passage to me at least. I read & read & read & neglect Turgenev & Miss C. Burnell. But why does my hand shake? why cant I write clearly?

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Sunday 13th Sept.

To begin with another question (just read the last page) why am I sitting here at 10.30 on a Sunday morning, rather stiff in the back, rather sore of the lips, writing diary, not novel? Because of dear old Tom largely. 24 hours (short interval for sleep) solid conversation, preluded by 2 hours stiffening conversation with the Hutchinsons. And at 1.30 Rosamond & Wogan to lunch; & at 4.30 Charleston to tea. Hence I am sitting here. Tomorrow, in the divine peace of Monday I shall walk on the downs & think of Tom & my parched lips with some degree of pleasure. Yes, it was worth it, though when a second day seemed on the cards my tongue fainted & my heart stood still. He is 10 years younger: hard, stiff, a plump boy scout in shorts & yellow shirt. He is engaging, humbly very much. He is tight & shiny as a wood louse (I am not writing for publication) But there is well water in him, cold & pure. Yes I like talking to Tom. But his wings perhaps curved & scimitar like round to the centre himself. He's settling in with some severity to being a great man. Keats wasn't that. We talked about Keats's letters. Tom said that letter writing was a form he preferred to Times leader writing. I think this hints some change in his views. He said that he no longer thought

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all just so more of a science of criticism. He who said that people exaggerate the intellectuality & condition of their poetry. "For example Ross Williamson in his book on me ... " He says that very serenely. I couldnt quote Hobbes with the same candour. Ross apparently attributed the dog, in Toms ~~Marlow~~ quotation from Webster, to profound associations with the dog star. Not a bit of it says Tom: I was having a joke about Webster. I connect all this with his bubbling up of life: at 46 he wants to live, to love: Even seeing Rochester is an event to him. He has seen nothing, nobody, for the last 10 years. We had it out about V. at breakfast. Some asperity on Tom's part. He wont admit the excuse of insanity for her—thinks she puts it on: tries to take her—frankly, mystifies Eliz Bowen. For this reason, I thought him a bitter resentful against the Sandwiches. I gather he will sit with (?) a good deal of an: & if I had time, I could move the heavy stone of his self esteem an inch or two higher, I should like to talk out to Tom about writing. Only there's always the reservation—I cant talk about "my writing"; so that talk about his writing falters. But I am to send him 2 rooms in Jones's Town. And we agreed about the infamy of

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teaching English; the idiocy of lectures; the whole
hierarchy of professors, system & so on: at any rate I
got him to go some way with me in denouncing
Oxford & Cambridge. He learnt (1) self confidence
at Oxford; (2) how to write plain English — that's
all. I daresay though he will become Prof. of
Poetry at Oxford one of these days.
His father was a brick merchant in St Louis;
& they lived in the slums among vacant lots.
& his father always gave away money; &
died, alas, in 1919 before Tom had become —
well, happily his mother lived to see him
what she called (& I daresay Tom too) a great
man. What a queer naive vanity all this is!
But of course, when you are thrown like an
ant, a grain into the hedge of the world — this
may be a definition of genius — there you
stick: & Tom sticks. To shut out, to
concentrate — that is perhaps — perhaps — one of the
necessary conditions. And now it is close on
eleven: the bells are tolling; the leaves are
very bright, of our pear tree & apple tree; &
I think I shall dawdle over letters &
books — I must read 12th night for Lydia's
Exhibition (an article on her appearance)
& so drowse as quietly as possible till
till we have to talk incessantly till
8 o'clock — & then O Lord — quiet,
alone, & sleep in my airy room:
& no talk tomorrow or tomorrow.
(why not write a book of Crm in
this style?)

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Saturday Sept. 23rd

This summer, I may say by way of criticism, & as a warning, has been too broken up with people. Next year I intend to be more circumspect. For the past fortnight I have lived, say, as other people live — that is outwardly. I gave up the Ps. [illegible] had reached the end of the version; & as we had the Lucases, Angelica & Eve, to stay, also to go to London, to dine with the Hutches, to have Morgan for the week end, & the Memoir Club tonight it seemed vain to attempt concentration; but to participate with one's friends. I've had to wedge in though that horrid tough little article on [illegible] which being tentatively roughed out this morning I write here.

And this a thorough wet day. The ponds are filling. L's new pond & garden are almost done, & surprisingly good, I think. The summer is put away locked up in the drawer with other summers. By God's grace we may get 10 or 12 days without visitors before going back; but I say this not with conviction. The truth is, I like it when people actually come: but I love it when they go. It was this subconsciously that made me assume that Peter & Prudence were only staying the night — whereas he had suggested two nights. This was the cause of some embarrassment. We had to go to London soon after breakfast. Then it came out; & the dried short haired terrier kind, breaking unexpectedly into loud barks. Why Peter, the [illegible], should convict

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Lonely for life to her, after Topsy. I cant think. A hand raised in the High or the Low would summon 20 such instantly. For life!—good God! I could not envisage a week of that ardent, shadeless, unlady, un lovely, beautiful like woman: at 22 perhaps: but think of 32, 42, 52—No. He is single eyed though: races through life between blinkers, seeing only the high road. Perhaps Braddons serves as sig lamp. The works for him in library. ~~His~~ They quote Greek & Latin: And he never reads a book unless he is going to write about it, he says. And so he will pen his way through life—charming, honest, [illegible], artistic as he is: & will leave a long trail of books behind him—which I shall never read, because he writes with frozen fingers. Old Ethel came, grown stout. And as I say, we go to Brighton today to meet Morgan, & I shall read my memoir tonight; send off my article on Monday morning, & so consider myself quit of all duties to my friends. Monday begins my holiday, my healthy space. I shall go for a long walk, I tell myself, & read & smoke in the evening, having played a game of bowls with L. And it will be a very fine day. And I shall pull open my curtains & see the stars at night. Really a marvellous spectacle—all for nothing. I am reading Margot—"is our greatest English authoress:" Molly Hamilton on Webbs: & Turgenev.

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Wedy
Sept. 26th

why not, one of these days, write a fantasy
on the theme of Crabbe? — a bio-graphi-cal
fantasy — an experiment in biography?

I had so much of the most profound interest to
write here — a dialogue of the soul with the soul, —
& I have let it all slip — why? Because of
feeding the gold fish, of looking at the new pond, of
playing bowls. Nothing remains now. I
forget what it was about. Happiness. The perfect
day, what was yesterday. And so on.
Now I began the morning by telephoning
corrections of 12' height to the N.S. I put in
a comma, take out semi-colon; & so on.
Then I come out here, having seen the carp,
& write Together.

Sat Oct 2nd.

Yes. I had to write about the memoir Club. &
Molly beating our hands. "Its torture anyhow,
when one cant hear a word" Then they
all came over. & we sat on the terrace:
Eleven people here: Julian in outline with
E. Read. "Julian's going to teach me to
think" she said as she went. I had to
scurry back to MacCarthys. That's all over.
Its October now; & we have to go to Hastings
Conference tomorrow & Wednesday. to Vita,
then back to London. I opened this in
order to make one of my self-admonishments
previous to publishing a book. Flush
will be out on Thursday; & I shall be
very much depressed, I think, by the kind of
praise. They'll say its charming, delicate,
ladylike. And it will be popular.

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well now I must let this slip over me without paying it any attention. I must concentrate on the Pargiters—or Here & Now. I must not let myself believe that I'm simply a ladylike prattler: for one thing it's not true. But they'll all say so. And I shall very much dislike the popular success of Flush. No, I must say to myself, this is a mere wisp, a veil of water; & so create, hardly, fiercely, as I feel now more able to do than ever before.

Monday Oct: 5th

No, I will not tackle the peculiarity of Turgenev. For one thing we are starting at 11.30 sharp for Sissinghurst: & then I think yesterday in bed; headache: minute weariness up my back: ~~the~~ Clouds coming in my neck; lay asleep: then (author of Stallions) through the rift reading Hugh Walpole. My word—how Hugh can let that rotten pear ~~—~~ be on his name God knows "God is Romance—God is Hugh Walpole's novel" is ~~the~~ The Character in Hugh Walpole has taken his & so on. And then Flush has bound. Also first fence. The Lit Sup: at a some obscure journalist to my pleasure. some obscure journalist detects no signs of whimsicality. So. though I shall get some nasty raps in the weeklies; I am running my ways this morning: when the pear bright soft October morning: when the pear tree has a ~~bright cascade of~~ splatter of brown leaves: Caban is under me: the big head is a brood jubi; the letters pond done: a thank Heaven, & & I am doing off. ever so happily, through Kent.

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This is going to be a happy day. I say: On
Tuesday we went to Hastings: a queer experience
always, that Conference: a door opened into a
buzzing bunting humming perfectly self dependent
other world. Bevan was volunteering when we
came in. But they were all marking time
owing to a compromise. There are debates I never
get clear. When one of the tub thumpers was up,
we went & sat on the balcony. The Hall is a
very gay Jewelcase seaside hall, adapted for
municipal concerts dances & so on. We sat
out & had coffee on a green table, & Gillies came, —
Phil Baker, & they discussed politics, again
invisible to me, though Gillies threw out the
remark (in deference to me, perhaps?) that he
was not naturally a politician, but preferred
Gardens: had been staying at Zennor: to a F.
has a whole field of gentians &c. Phil
does not truckle to the arts, for which I like him.
I always think about his teeth being filed
And then the Rodent — a mixture of ~~Tom~~
Bob & Youngs — reminiscent of my early
Youth — a rather thin, water blanched kind
of man: with hair parted & steel grey eyes —
& a mouth like a spinster's reticule, but
of some humane, inflated by his humanity,
sufferings of prisons. Son who goes to Russia,
vegetarian, once every 3 weeks overcome
with lust for beef — ate fish — he ~~sat~~
seen at lunch at Frascati's, or some such
place. I had a vast plate of beef & fed
Pinka on the bone of his cutlet. R. in his
way genial, a man of the world; a
gentleman I thought as I followed him
through the hotel by a secret passage out.
He held himself so well. Then to the
Queens Hotel where the biggest Lodge;

& the ~~ship~~ ships passed very indifferently on the horizon

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then Robert being a gentleman wished to entertain us & crooked his finger & summoned Pethick Lawrence & Mrs Robertson & the Lady who calls herself Mrs being in fact a Fitzroy & the friend of Mrs Walter. I talked to Pethick L: a frost bitten blue eyed little old man now; & he was reading Hobbly on V. W. You are V. W.? Yes. I said: & then in my emotional way praised his speech that wet day at Brighton: which kindled him a little; & he told me about his wife, now speaking at Oxford about armament firms. I was enlightened & horrified; how France & Germany combine to stir up war: were joint manufacturers of guns & so on. All this should be a government undertaking he said. I said, what an argument against Capitalism! And then he had to go to the Conf^ce to hear Dalton: but we could only stand a little of Hugh; & so went out, got into the car, & drove home. The night before we went to a meeting here, in the Club, & L. broached the question of a play Ground. Captain Palmer talked to me — a man with one idea in his perfectly direct upright wizened tanned little being. His wife more voluptuous had been at Wye races. Moreover was sleepy. He had a great idea of duty to the village: called the men Beck, Hubbard & so on, & suggested in despair that Toc H in Lewes should be asked to supply a helper to run a boys club. He was also inclined to think Mr Hancock a menace. But I must get ready now for Vita.

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Friday 6th

Less jubilant, on account of Rebecca Wests criticism: that F is not one of my best &c: but rather braced. The problem will now be how to evade entirely the highbrow popularity: a curious reversal of my old problem: but & really the same. An interesting problem: I like problems to change. Now for Turgenev, in my braced mood. It is better to write braced than relaxed — no doubt true; but this morning (Saturday) cheered by Bunny's praise: says its a new venture: the best in proportion & so on: And today not a word about me anywhere. So thats soothing. And if tomorrow were over, Sunday Times — Observer — Hugh,) could settle in quietly. Oh, & Maynard says my memoir was 'wonderful': which pleases me for the light it throws on Here & Now. Perhaps I can bring off that though. And now, letters, packing, going from the Lodge to the house: a damp dull day so far, but looks clear. However theres the cement works here: so I must balance one thing with another. A very crowded gay summer in its way. Too crowded; but what happens. coming back that night from London with L. for example: the country at midnight. And going up early: & bowls. & our solitary evenings: & cooking dinner.

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Monday Oct. 9th

52 Tavistock Square.

Back again & our burden is on us. Mrs Woolf
yesterday; today David Cecil; tomorrow Nessa Quentin
Julian lunch: Hugh Walpole tea: Thursday
Ellen. Must I always — so it begins. with
[illegible], depressed in the background. I'm
through the Flush wave though. A small one
compared with others. Desmond praises: Mortimer P.
leaves me between the rough. coarse yellow teeth
teeth of poor Ind. Glasgow. So it's over: —
apprehensive for the strain of people, dentists, clothes —
but no: I'm going to master this. I'm going to
let my self have room & verge enough. Talk of
leaving London yesterday, moving the Press to
Monks House: talk of buying a cottage in
the North. We have plenty of money anyhow.
A soft day; have to take the car to Hendon,
am writing with Turgenev gen morning.
Can I finish this week, & start Here & now
next? Can I?

And then Desmond broke in; yes — but today
is Monday again, the 16th; & I have lived
through the scrimmage of that week, & actually
at 2.30 today delivered my Turgenev to
the typist, & so have tomorrow free for
Here & Now. Free — yes. After Phelps W— &
Beaks to supper yesterday. I forced the cold
mutton & put it in the pot. Mary
Comes today: L. is sneezing: pray God —
not a cold: Mrs Evans is pending;
I want, rather vainly, to read the book of
Job. Tomorrow & tomorrow & tomorrow.
Yesterday we said Time stand still &
walked up a hill outside Princes Risborough.
I seem to have stopped unearthing the Ps about
Aug 20th then rewrote:

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Friday
Oct 20th

Did I say I was going to write Here & Now? Not a
word done. L. had influenza: so Elly says.
Up & about in 2 days of course — But last
night I came to the decision to stop the
career of the Argento pen: to revert to Richmond
days. What is the use of drudging & sweating
& curtailing Siena & entirely obliterating
all Italy England Ireland & Greece for
the sake of publishing Susan Lawrence &
bad novels! No. Here we stop &
take a fresh course — we go to Rodmell
tomorrow & I shall there broach the new
scheme. Look I cant write. cant hold a
pen, ah for the bother & the worry.
I can only hear the pump booming; all
Its true I wrote the Pargiters, Its true
yesterday till my head spun. But
we've had the devils own week. spring &
time the Press has lost its if it
balance. & could regain it to the old
now made a contribution the magazine
ideals. We might start to be pictured
Its possible that Flush is substantial
Brace yesterday talked of though I
seem. It will fall through. why
suppose: but for gods sake I have a
make more money? Hamilton to
Morgan letter to write a sentence in
head — cant so spin — a sentence
the air, & even control my nib.
Do no more.

Oh & Gerald Brenan's book is
an unmitigated tract — a sickly slab of
plum cake iced with pink sly
blown sugar in
quite of Bunny

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Sunday 29th Oct.

No my head is too tired to go on with Roberts & Elvira — they're to meet at St Pauls — this morning. I wish I could get it quite a calm & unconscious. This last is difficult, owing to Flush, owing to the perpetual little spatter of comment that keeps me awake. Yesterday the Granta said I was now defunct — Orlando Waves Flush represent the death of a potentially great writer. This is only a rain drop, I mean the sort some little pimpled undergraduate takes to administer, just as he would put a frog in one's bed: but then there's all the letters, & the requests for pictures — so many that, foolishly perhaps, I wrote a sarcastic letter to the N. S. — this provoking more rain drops. This metaphor shows how tremendously important unconsciousness is when one writes. But let me remember that fashion in literature is an inevitable thing; also that one must grow & change; also that I have, at last, laid hands upon my philosophy of anonymity. My letter to the N. S. is the crude public statement of a part of it. How odd last winters revelation was! & freedom: which now I find makes it quite easy for me to take life much more strongly & steadily. I will not be 'famous' 'great'. I will go on adventuring, changing, opening my mind & my eyes, refusing to be stamped & stereotyped. The thing is to free one's self: to let it find its dimensions: not be impeded. And though this as usual is only a pot shot, there is

A man wrote today that my letter is to be the basis of a new guild for the P of P. Lee January number of something or other

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a great deal of ~~sad~~ substance in it. October has been a bad month; but might have been much worse without my philosophy. It's been harassed, then L. with influenza, (only for 2 days), quicken all my insight into drains: then Nessa away; Quentin ill; with Stark, however, I have forced myself to space out these horrors. But enough. Raymond came yesterday: Francis still very much paralysed; after 10 minutes the Raymond machine clogs: an uneasy shallow sandy mind: Eliz Bowen improving; oh & the Kingsley Martins never cease to invite us to meet Low. Shall I now read the New Testament? The great family dinner is tonight. I think the pump is improved by a letter to Bentley.

Sunday Nov. 12th

I ought to have made a note on Nessa & the aeroplane — last Friday — no Friday week — at Croydon. We took them there at ~~7.30~~ 7. Had to be up by moonlight at 6.30. Drove across an empty delicately tinted ~~empty~~ Croydon London; lines all much marked: Croydon a great space like a green race course. We stood on the top of the roof: saw the aeroplane whirl till the propellers were lost to sight — simply evaporated. Then the aeroplane takes a slow run circling. The is death I said. feeling how the human contact was completely severed. They went with a sublime air & disappeared like a person dying. The soul going: And we remained. I saw the plane become a little mark on the sky. A good funeral could be arranged.

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And I did not at all enjoy waiting for Nessa
to come back across the steppes: rat making
conversation with Lady Simon— So that's one.
And our visit to France— the strange Chinese Idol;
old Borrell grown very soft & babyish, in
slippers, with her stout stick beside him, &
apologising in an airy way for the basin, he
has broken— all very airy now, for he
cant remember name— Vanessa or Virginia? & so
on. Now, this minute back from the
Wogans: a lonely foxred glow from beech trees:
old Oxford farm houses: theirs, a large, too
wide, too square & cold, old house; disjoined
to me unpleasantly, by Bunny's decorations—
I prefer the old to the new there, unless done
with more taste. But how nice, easy,
mobile, affectionate, & humane it all was.
We talked of Lytton & Carrington last night,
Wogan sent for, ~~40~~ 30 miles, & twice
one day to master Ralph, who emerged
from the bushes, where he was skulking,
threatening suicide. And had barricaded
her door against Frances— Wogan, has a
shrewd worldly sense for all her butter
Said Ralph play-acted: was a lonely, but
boozing man: brings, you see, stark naked,
a bath among keepers. They're all naked
they all comment eternally on 'parts'
& breasts— a kind of rough parody of
the old Ham Spray— Lytton acted in
the Kitchen. We walked this morning,
but soft mist hid the hills; all was red
brick Queen Anne, stately, arboreous—
the moment of loveliness that comes to
everything over it today— Harrod to lunch—
a young man with black eyebrows & white teeth
So home to tea

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14th Nov And I have scarcely 3 minutes before tea to
say that Jacqueline Stiven has taken up a great
deal of time, & inspired a great deal of
ingenuity by sending a passage from it by a boy O
to the Statesman. L. was positive it was a hoax
But I have now been in touch with Mrs Miles
Reid, & Mrs Stiven the Syrian—names that will
mean nothing to me in a years time. We
went to Islington this afternoon to look for
rooms for Tom: it is a fine autumn day;
Vita & Leon dined last night, & I am so
dissipated I could not write a word this
morning. Then Bunny came about the hoax.
So to tea, & I should add so to
Westminster to hear the March of the Women,
Ethel Smyth; & Rebecca thinking on married
womens careers. Instead I shall sleep over
the fire, reading Tom, Lucian, & Michael
Field Diaries, alone thank God.

23rd Nov. Bengtson road after dining with the Hutches last
night to meet Michael Arlen to produce
the finished article on Hair & Mrs. perhaps
I had better produce the raw. It was a real
party—that is I wore my velvet dress. I was not
But I took it in my stride. half worked.
much beglamoured. The thing only
E M Roberts came in, in a ruffle of pink
feathers round her shoulders, as we were
ranged on the stairs coming down. Partly
pudgy. her point the eyes, which to me
seemed sadder, as if she had flung away the
orange & she talked of her daughter— And
I had—oh voluminously—all M A's
contention, as I expected. He made £50,000
out of the Green Hat, which money he has

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perpetually to atone for — as by talking of W.H.L.
& how he escaped his influence, how he made his
own life for he married his own wife, a
Dumb Greek called Atalanta, — silent, he said,
but a perfect lady — & has 2 children & can
keep them all, with drawing rooms servants —
all this is probably justification. Now he is
writing an intelligent novel, from real experience,
lackeys to highbrows. Yet oh Mrs Woolf
how I envy Aldous Huxley his background —
his education — I was at a 3rd rate public school,
& lived in Earls Court. His father died. I
a broken heart when Roumania came into
the war. A little scraping dingy person claiming
monkey-faced man. My wife the Countess
Atalanta ... always still justifying;
but I didn't feel that need myself. Sat with
Victor & B in Mary's bedroom & V. got
more & more —
above himself — as he will do more & more —
two butcher like in his red flesh, two
thick cut, underdone, assertive. "We do all
that sort of thing in public — fondling B's arm.
We don't think of age. Virginia — Called me
Virginia too after "The most malicious
person I've ever met". That stung a
little, but not too much to get a real rise. Talked
of Dadie & Mrs. Barnes. Gave a
sporadic account of Dadie's father's death & so on.
— The
was two self assured with the P's! I shall
handsome unsensible young man. B. called
tell him some home truths.
out of the room. About 20 minutes.
That V. on the telephone. "How dare you
call me conceited! We can't dine out together
in future that's all ... I will call you
conceited — I'd write to Virginia ... you
were conceited ..." & so on: always
bickering. He brought her a handbag full

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of the Rothschild rubies, worth £300, and so that they
Cant be insured — a crown that glows a deeper red
light. He said there was a hook in the box.
No, I dont altogether like that. So home at last,
leaving Gh at 44.

Saturday 25th

L's birthday. Off to see the Seckers with a view
to writing; see her letter. Dear me. This comes
however after a ~~bad~~ bad spell: I mean these sittings in
Kensington Gt. & I want a breather before I go on
to Kitty's party. (I always make her say I ought
to have been doing this kind of thing & then I see
Lord Lansdowne. But stop.) I was going to say
old Birrell died last Monday; & is cremated —
odd to have had that last talk, in the Hotel
at Brighton — odd to have seen the sharp
old man at the very edge of taking off,
sitting there pink soft yet with his
rather formidable attention, with his stick
stick & his slippers. "These legs, that
have taken me to so many good places
wont work anymore" he said, apologising
for not being able to get up. "I made it a
rule never to refuse what was offered"!
A story about C B. And Frankie's brain. —
They took out what was all nonsense —
the Eton part — all nonsense". But
at one moment the Birrell family was
on the verge of extinction " Do
I ~~joke~~ And saying "Did you know the
Souls —" Of Margot — a very generous
woman, believe she's coming tomorrow"
the door opened. & I was beckoned off from
old Birrell to Francis

Wed. 29th Nov.

So feebly minded after too much talk — Sat to
Nessa, Tom to tea, Fry's dinner. I cant make way
even through the shallow water of Sickert. I am
making a sketch of him at random. And so
I thought I would make a footnote about the soul.
I think I've got rid of vanity: of Virginia. Oh
what a riddance. I've just read an article on me
by a man called Peel in the Criterion.
I do feel this a great liberation. Then I
need not be that self. Then I can be entirely
private. I have cut the string that ties me to
that quivering bag of nerves — all its gratifications
& acute despair. Mine I did. ~~[illegible]~~ One sees people
This is another great discovery.
limping & striking at a thing like a straw horse
& its not me at all. I sit back in comfort
& look round. I wonder if Nessa has always
been like this? This calming. This disguised.
One does not seek uncandidly for opinions
on oneself. How have I come to this? Will it
last? How will it work? ~~[illegible]~~ I lie
awake at night astonishingly happy sometimes
What a poem. In 10 minutes. The advantage
is that it gives one a great deal to think
on L: on reading: on doing what one likes.
I wonder whether this is related to any
of the famous human feelings? A
rough note only which I meant to make
some time ago.

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4 Dec.

Staying with the Fishers. A queer thing, people who accept convention. Gives them a certain force. H. has the organisation behind him. But robs them of character, of vagaries, of depth, warmth the unexpected. They [illegible] along the grooves. H. to some extent anxious to impress his privileged impartial position. Many stories of "when I was in the Cabinet". Yet why not? The odd thing is that when with them one accepts their standards. And what's wrong? So nice, just, equable, humane. But how chill! And over the shoulder I see the rulers; small, but not evil: striving, — a complex impression. Warden have lived there since 1370 — so so. How can he differ! Young men all very smooth, but talkative. No thirst, strike on. A nice nameless boy told me he read [illegible] & [illegible] daily. Some like Oxford, some think it a place of restrictions. Scatter, [illegible] son said this. Yes. Herbert accepts the current values, only rather intellectualises, relines. Desmond Tom, Clive, Maynard (partly) in favour of the great forces of vitality — Wonder & George. Lettice warpish about Labour party. LG their trump card — their pattern man. No music in Tom. Ottoline duly tells stories of Balfour in the manner of the great man — discreet, nipped, bloodless like a butler who used to the best families. Looks at history of Europe. Is an example. Do their duty by the college. Represent culture, politics, worldly wisdom gilt with letters. Nothing to whizz one off one's perch at New College: all in good taste, very kind. But Lord to live like that!

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Monday 7th Dec.

I was walking through Leicester Sqre — how far from China — just now when I read Death of noted Novelist on the posters. And I thought of Hugh Walpole. But it is Stella Benson. Then why write anything, immediately? I did not know her. but have a sense of those fine patient eyes: the weak voice; the cough; the sense of oppression. She sat on the terrace with me at Rodmell. And now, so quickly, she's gone, what might have been a friendship. Scarcely a patient & very sincere — I think of her; trying to cut through, in one of those difficult evenings, to some deeper layer — certainly we could have reached it, given the chance. I'm glad I stopped her at the door as she got into the little car & asked her to call me Virginia — to write to me. And she said There's nothing I should like better. But it is like the quenching of something — her death out there in China; & I sitting here, & writing about her, & no more to come. & so forth, & yet so true; & How mournful the afternoon seems, with the newspaper carts dashing up Kingsway "Death of noted Novelist" on the placard. A very fine steady mind: much suffering; suppressed; — There seems to be some reproach to me in her death, as in K. M.'s. I go on: & they cease. Why? Why not my name on the posters? And I have a feeling of the protest each might make: gone with their work unfinished — each so suddenly. Stella was 41. "I am going to send you my book —" & so on. A dreary island, she lived on, talking to Colonels.

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A curious feeling: when a writer like S. B dies, that one's response is diminished: ~~the past~~ Here & Now won't be lit up by her: its life ~~less~~ lessened. My reflexion — what I send out — less porous & radiant — as if the thinking stuff were a web that were fertilised only by other peoples (her that is) thinking it too: now lacks life.

Sunday Dec. 17th

I finished part 4 of Here & Now yesterday — to therefore indulge in a contemplative morning. To freshen my memory of the war, I read some old diaries. How close the tears come, again & again; as I read of L. & me at the Green: our quarrels: how he crept into my bed with a letter from me, & so on: how we reckoned our income, & was Green tea free for a treat. The sense of all that floating away for ever down the stream, unknown for ever: queer sense of the past swallowing so much of ourselves. And today we make a loop with the past by going in our Grand car to see Margaret & Lilian. Well we are very happy. Life buds & sprouts all round us: by which I mean, Everybody accepts if we ask them. Joyce Wethered would ~~also~~ 'adore' to come; & on Tuesday Stephen Spender, Miss Lynd & me, & Plomer & K-Raine come in — all young, all new. And Vita lunches. And tomorrow I go to tea with the Richmonds. I think we live in a rich porous earth. I think we live very fully, freely, & adventurously. In short, what we made of that strange prelude is good.

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The question that now fronts me as a writer is the war Chapter. That I shall leave for a few days to simmer. No doubt the brew will shout out suddenly at Rodmell. We go on Thursday. This book therefore nears its end. Too thick a book. I dined with Clive to meet Sickert the other night. S. is drunk & old till warmed with wine. He scarcely eats. At last he expanded, & sang a french song & kissed Nina's hand — spontaneously: mine more formally. But the I think a difficult old man probably. But the ingrained artist. Theresa modest, suppliant. Laughter — Extravagana. How he live was born in Germany, but not German. And lived at Munich till he was 8; & the German maid met the mad King who walked beside her, & she said — I forget. S. branches off. Then he went to Reading, a school kept by a drunken old woman, who beat a boy who had broken her arm "And we 30 little wretches lay there cowed..." How far he wants me to write about him, I dont know: I suspect he is changeable: that he forgets. T. prompted him with words. She knows all his stories. He gets up at 5 & goes to his Garage studio at 7 & has difficulty in lighting her stove. He reads 3 papers. He wore a pilots cap with a Green brim. but no overcoat, though it was freezing cold (I bought a fur coat by the way last week) He says one paint — let me see — the caravels galloped towards me. Angry with Agnew. Not a penny from

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that now came his way. Never again, he said. A fine Roman head, crisp hair, too thick over the ears. Small dark eyes. broad forehead. On Rosie's a darling – but dear me ... "great joker about Rosie. Had warned L. Lydia not to be a fool & try to act. "She's thrown away her reputation: she had a great name with the public – now she's lost it" Had lunched with the Ks. Maynard told them to listen to the wg. found very audible. How she had her hours, & we must all learn to unname, to give up: (here C. interposed one of her ring the bell sentences, about Virginia's declining now from her glory & living with dogs: mistaking as he meant it to be) And so we went on. a little wine-flown, but friendly & communicative, – living on our capital – I mean that we were all artists – free masonry. I cant feel very sure though of any fact or relationship; I've not seen him these 10 years, & then only to sing & joke. Yet he's chiselled, severe; has read: was reading Goldoni he said. & Flaubert's letters. And is Madame Bovary good? Is the sensation good? I'm a literary painter, romantic – You are the only person who understands me – kissing my hand. So home in the frost to find Leon sitting with L: & he sat & sat. propounding rather fumbling questions about literature, till at 1.45 I said I was cold, moved to the fire & he – very reluctantly – went. Grayer, broader than I thought: & I'm afraid, from reading his 2nd novel in MS., not so intelligent.

21st Dec.

I guess that my Sickert, over which I took such tremendous pains, is not much liked. Richmond thanks merely formal. So why go on with these essays? why not invent a new method? I'm worried over Goldsmith — cant be good to swerve so much over transitions & packing in of ideas. But I have said this before, & say it now only because this is the relic of a morning when I should tidy, pack, write letters & so on. Then we lunch at $\frac{1}{2}$ to one. & then go, this yellow cold morning. No longer the great transition that it used to be. Spender & M. Lynd to dinner: a free & easy night. but both notably young & at first deferential. S. has the makings of the long winded bore. Thats odd. A handsome poetic boy. to look at — & very ardent, & a great egotist. Lynd silent, secretive, hobble tongued. She will no doubt become a scribbler too. like her parents. Foolishly perhaps I denounced scribblers.

It struck me that a very plain narrative might be interesting. ~~The was~~ Yesterday I wrote Goldsmith all the morning; we lunched; Pinka's eyes are bad; we walked round the square: then I shopped in Oxford Street; went to Warings: liked the china cups: think of buying a dinner service: home at 4: L. to Mother: I went to Nessa: Angelica cutting out silver paper hearts. Duncan entertaining Bradford Corporation: was given desert service: back to dinner: read a good MS. by a man called Graham: heard a Haydon symphony: bed. A fairly specimen day. Letter from Hugh Walpole.

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January 1934.

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1934

Jan. 16th

1934

I have let all this time—3 weeks at Monks—slip because I was there so divinely happy & pressed with ideas—another fresh flood of Pargiters or Here & now (odd that Goldie's letter mentions that—The Waves is also here & now—I had forgotten) So I never wrote a word of farewell to the year; not a word describing the keepers & the Jone's; nothing about the walks I had over so far into the downs; or the reading—Mauriac, Giono, & the usual trash. And Clara died; & I sat with Mrs Woolf who read "She asked so little of life" she crooned it, rather lying in a doze. Nothing of what has been written; & now we are back again. (And have I a touch of the flue?) what a bore, since I am floating rather rapturously in the Raid scene & dont think that 3 days in bed would be at all useful. No doubt its nothing though. Vita dined last night, & we discussed Sparrows book. She is always generously impartial: never takes sides, & lives in a set—a good example. Though without my intensity of feeling (I add immediately to recoup myself) There is rather the style of Here & Now: my random rated letter writing style. Lyn wants me to write for her: Ethel to lend my Screen: that is the worst of ones friends—these letter unfair demands that make one turn on the other side in the middle of the night. But it is lunch time. This book, alas, must continue soberly in the same cover as 1933: too wasteful to begin another & leave all this blue paper blank.

Tuesday
Jan 30th

People seen:
Mary Hutch.
Jack in Grey Dress:
Ld. Castlerosse:
£/6 cigar like
a Jackass's
penis: Nessa
Angelica,
Roger, Duncan:
Rose Macaulay
I. Davidson:
Noel Coward
Ld Ivor S. Churchill
Colefax's:

at this moment, 5 to 4, Ethel Smyth is about to visit Leonard on business, her infringement of the Pankhurst copyright I imagine: therefore I sit down here till 4.30. in order to escape. We have Tom & Tommie dining: & I am going to say I shall call you Stephen. Rather a waste of people; & a dinner to meet Noel Coward at Sibyls on a cold foggy night. Nessa painting me again Christmas mercifully over. Nessa very hard up. Question how to make money. Talk of Tom's caricatures. ensued between us. Rather an old woman talk—children—money, education, ways of life: I veiling my curiosity penetration playing tentatively round her mind, & afraid to expose my own. Yesterday I went to Mappins about my watch bracelet L's birthday present: came back; sat; talked; Julian came to tea; read Youngs French travels: rather headachy: sleepy; strange trances in which I make up the Canterbury read; to bed; sleep. Today, waking Here & Now, longing to end the Raid Scene, which draws out—Nessa my headache: then I shall patter write something: lunch with L: went to Danish Laundry about his collars. A nice frank shopman. Collars may have got among the women. Collars. Back room white stuff. Women ironing. Coppers with more women standing. Looked at flats, Darcy downstairs: L. home to paint. I to wander to the Law Courts. Bever Case being tried. Penetrated from End to End. Judges Chambers: a kind of vault. Kings Bench, &c. People scurrying. my sense of guilt at having no business there. Go to bas: home: & found my bracelet.

Wednesday
14th Feb.

But it was rather a bad headache: 10 days recumbent,
sleeping, dreaming, dipping into oh dear how many
different books, how capriciously: Thackeray,
Younge's travels in France—but too many
revolutions on hand actually: I don't want to
read of them: I want turnips & peace & settlement:
then a book a day from the Times; Benson,
Selincourt & a dead life by Neale of
Elizabeth which pretending to impartiality
emphasises the double chin & the wig of
Mary at the critical moment: a pity for
impartial, learned historians! All men are
liars. And so to Rodmell for the
week end. The bees buzzing in the
hyacinths: the earth emerging very
darkened & sharpened from winter
under a veil: which became fog as
we drove up, was fog to day. In
addition, the house rings with the
clamour of Electricians: the new bath
water engine being inserted: & then the
surveyor comes & says we are overloading
the two floors down with books: a
heavy bill threatens: so out to buy
ink for my new Waterman, with which
I am to take notes for a new Common
Reader: & Ethel Sands to tea — my
first visitor. Yesterday I had long
Dawson for the first time to write
letter— No letters therefore to day.
Now I have just refused the Nat. Portrait
Gallery offer to draw me, thank God.
& am very cautiously reviving Sickert.

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16th Feb.

Five minutes here before going to lunch with Irena. A great Nelly row yesterday, which I hereby declare the last. It was about the workmen & keeping out, & the end was that we had eggs for lunch & were forced to dine at the Cock, expensively & badly. No more of this, I say. & anticipate many days of ill ease. Some violent scenes, & then pray God, after Easter, peace. Finished my Sickert article all the same. I put off Here & Now till next week.

18th Feb

And I began Here & Now again this morning, Sunday, at the point where I left off all but 3 weeks ago for my headache. Hereby I note that from 2 to 3 weeks is the right space. What? I can still not quite cold, as after 6 weeks: I can see how to revise. Carry it on my mind, & can see how it has gone — the talk during the Raid — running all over the place, because I was tired: now I must press together: get into the mood & start again. I want to raise up the images round me, & live strongly & quietly there for 6 weeks. The difficulty is the usual one — how to adjust the two worlds. It is no good getting violently excited: one must combine. And I have the Nelly question on top of me in addition to the usual grind of what Ethel calls society. Some

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planning is therefore necessary. I have to 'see' Ottoline, Ethel, K. Furse, Ly Cholmondeley (perhaps), E. Bowen: Lyn comes to dinner tonight to discuss her rather acid & thin-blooded bantling. And I've made up my mind what I'm going to say. I wd write if she lets me tell the truth. The new electric boiler in & a bathing orgy [illegible] water this morning. The K of Belgium killed mountaineering. All last week they were fighting in Vienna: this somehow comes closer than usual to our safe London life: the people shot down. why! John came to see L: as spruce as ever, & has left his poems. We went to Angelica yesterday: & ate eggs in Mrs C's large Adam room. A. has to speak as Mrs Pankhurst. [illegible] A despises all games. watched La Crosse.

20th Feb. To note the interesting stages of the duel with Nelly. Today I said, do you want this quarrel to go on? I would like it to stop now: but I shall discuss it calm. Whereupon she said it was she wished it to end, but it was all my fault. And she wished to have nothing hanging over her. So I am indifferent calm, & Lord knows if I shall give her notice tomorrow.

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10 to Eleven on the Sunday March 4th — a fine day, no
fog: & I'm to write to Nessa for the last time in
10 months: & the house is being done, & we've
taken rooms at Pethas, & — &.
On Letters & Now I'm going to start that sorrowfully
tomorrow. Kelly & Ed in Richmond: this
Chapter is to be visual & animal; spring; movement;
plants: birds dogs; air; flowers.
Yesterday at Ethel Smyths Mass. The Queen in
the box: nodding from side to side: Ethel in
her 3 cornered hat beside her; with her hand
up. The Q. bowing, doing her duty graciously.
To the Lyons — I forget the mass — where in
that sordid crumbling room assembled the [illegible]
Gerald by Diana. by Leonard & the [illegible]
Ly Lovat & [illegible]; armed Clerks & shops
girls eating cream buns. All rather
Students & obscure & rubbing too much on
one strong as usual to be very interesting
Ethel had elements — the great sun
setting behind the trees in Hyde Pk. as we
drove back. Oh dear me. L— is doing the
books & wont let me help. Lydia's
Dolls House tonight: on Wednesday
Nessa's Private view: Sickert here to tea —
rather a nasty rat trap that man with
hard blue eyes. very old — no Marconi
about his own greatness — "We'll collect it
all one of these days" he said, sublimely about
his art & culture. Mr Sickel comes to tea
suppressed — thank the Lord. No Now to write
official position to me.

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March 14

I cannot hold out any hope for the next 14 days. There's the workmen everywhere: there's Nelly gay & garrulous as a lark. — Can I do it? I must. I must. And I caught an influenza — a little shivering bout at Monks on Sunday: cant screw my brain up therefore: & yet have the feeling that some magnificent chapters await me. If only the 14 days were over — & I in my bed again! How human beings torture each other! A black day, pouring rain: dust everywhere. Let me see: there was a lonely day at Monks. There was the suffusion of blue in white cotton wool. Mr Lavender talked at the meeting about growing mushrooms. Ethel came over — to deposit her horrid gnawed bone & sucked chocolate — & St John's praise to wit — at my feet. A very ruthless thriving woman in some ways. And then all the rest of the Kitty Eleanor Nessa comes this thaw: bed; waiting for L. Cooking dinner. Back today & a man threw a parcel containing stone at the basement window & broke it. A thief presumably. Lady Oxford wants to meet me at Otts. Mr Redde the builder talking about Tenby & a little church on the rocks. The sea comes over the chapel floor. And he bought a picture in Holland Park for 7/6 that reminded him of Wales. Then the bookbinder. That's my day. Now in the rain to Vera.

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19th March

I cannot describe how the Nelly situation weighs on my spirits. I am determined not to discuss it with L. either. She pressed me this morning You show no confidence in me; you dont treat me like a maid— Oh dear—how tempted I was to say Then go: but I bit my tongue. And then down here, trying to make it up. I couldnt imagine it would be so hard, & the worst to come. On the top of this the hammering painting, ordering of books. And I cant get into Flood therefore write H & N. though I had I think rather a brilliant flash this morning how to compact the rather fluid Eleanor. I shall have a shot anyhow. But Nelly spoils all. And to think none of this need have happened had I stuck to my guns 3 years ago! Now I must – will. We went to Cambridge on Saturday, lunch with Dadie: Rosamond & Wogan: I ought not to ask him that. He is jealous about R's fame: she not. So to A. & C. & there was Sheppard with all the little Eton boys, like the white chaps of a Christmas pig. A dragging weak performance. Lovely drive home in the twilight through the wide unmarked country. To dine with Nessa last night. Clive there. N. all a blowing, a glowing with the success of her show. & the money made. Then in came Lydia, all se-low, owing to her success: & I felt so old so cold so dumpish, nothing blowing or fiery glowing in me owing to Nelly, but not jealous: I dont think that. Maynard very flown low. & Duncan low. & Clive great & now

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I think of walking round to Otts to meet Lady Oxford &
if I can change my mood — rather a violent
remedy. A clear wet spring windy day.
L. went to Drews & bought Clarks present, then
to L's hat & tailor; so home. All yesterday
I did the diningroom books. Today he is
finishing the study & they are painting the
stairs. Oh for the end of this chapter, for
Rodmell & peace & freedom to use my
mind again.

26th March "The women to come" — that's with Nelly — wh. is
now coming very near — by the time — 3.30 — tomorrow
it will be over. And then there'll only be the
one dreadful day & we shall be off. I feel
Executioner & the executed in one. Meanwhile this a
brilliant spring day; I'm back in my studio,
white, clean, more spacious, after 3 days of
Pepper. Miss Wallace is arranging books;
Hugh, Stephen, William, Ott, & Vita all
coming to tea & so on; I dine with Vita; then
must ring up Eliz Bowen about our beds. I face
lunar, & so the unmitigable day passes. then has to be
upto & unmentionary season: then has to be
lived Tragicomically

27th March The great scene with Nelly is now over, & I
came much less violently than I supposed. She stood
by the drawingroom door in the full light,
white & pink, with her funny rather foolish mouth
face puckered up. And I made my
speech correctly. & even was able to say
"And I expect you want to get another place
too —" persuasively. She had one outburst —
"I can say nothing — its all because you ...
it was my night out, & I asked you ...

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which I cut short: & said we had agreed to part on
good terms, gave her a cheque for £25 & a £1
note for my mending "but you dont owe me
anything" she said: & so she went upstairs & I came
down now. I suppose some further lamentation
and argument, with L. perhaps, is inevitable.
But Lord what a relief now!

11th April

I am a little proud of myself; for I have just read
through the last pages, & now pat myself on the
back, & say that I kept to my resolution.
through thick & thin, & am now back here
with Nelly gone, Annie upstairs, & Mabel,
declared by Ltta, to be a treasure, coming to
see me tomorrow. So this has been
definitely accomplished, after all these years.
The sense of freedom & calm — no more brooding:
no more possessiveness: no more sense of
being part of Nellys world; & her planted
there. Even if the cooking is less luxurious,
that is all to the good. We had a
horrid day last Wednesday — a fortnight ago:
she trailed about, somehow pathetic, to me,
catching at me, & whimpering, & revealing her
own vanity. "But they'll blame me —"
However she rubbed off her spiteful little
voice at L. when the parting came.
thinking only of herself as usual; & thou
we left her in the kitchen, grasping a wet
cloth, "No I really couldn't, Sir" she
said, when L. held out his hand. How
dazed & free & great I felt driving down to
Lewes! She has taken with her all
the cookery books, except two elementary
manuals, & the chair cover — a last
spasm of possessive spite.

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17th April. So jaded am I after last night that I cannot add a word to my Sickert or make out a sketch of the last chapter of Here & Now. A high price to pay for a hurried dinner at the Etoile: racing to Macbeth; talk to Dodo Macnaghten; then to see Fred Pollock act on the stage of Sadlers Wells.

An idea about Shre. that the play demands coming to the surface — hence insists upon a reality wh. the novel need not have, but perhaps should have. Contact with the surface. Coming to the top. This is working out my theory of the different levels in writing, & how to combine them: for I begin to think the combination necessary. This particular combination with the surface is imposed on the dramatist necessarily: how far did it influence Shre? Idea that one cd work out a theory of fiction &c on these lines: how many levels attempted. whether kept to or not.

18th April. A morning like last. Instead of smoking 6 or 7 cigarettes as I write of a morning, I now, for 3 mornings make myself smoke one only. And rather enjoy doing without. Tonight Tom, Maynard dine to discuss Tom's book, After Strange Gods. Julian & E. Bowen come in afterwards. I want to try & make myself write down the discussion tomorrow, as I am keeping off fiction.

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19th April

Oh but I am much too sleepy to make even a brief note of the talk. We began at dinner. Tom & Maynard talking about his book. You have brought up again one of the eternal questions, & nobody has even tried to consider it. No, said Tom, much like a great toad with jewelled eyes. And John said that he would be inclined not to dissolve X's if it were morality. proved that without it morality is impossible. "I begin to see that our generation – yours & mine V. owed a great deal to our fathers religion. And the young, like Julian, who are brought up without it, will never get so much out of life. They're trivial: like dogs in their lusts. We had the best of both worlds. We destroyed X's & yet had its benefits." Well the argument was something like that. I pressed Tom to define belief in God; but he sheered off. Then Julian came. The economic question: the religion of Communism. Then the wont of a foundation on a silly mistake of old Mr Ricardo which Mr Keynes some time will put right. And then there will be no more ~~st~~ Economists. How will you love Julian, then — ? How will you live then? You who have no moral strictness? Love, so Julian said, was your morality which has landed us in psycho-analysis. but ~~we're both~~ I prefer my life in many ways. Maynard accused the young of being anxious to publish too soon. That's to make money. We want to make our names, & make money. The talk has changed said J. Chief in below the talk has no sense of tradition. It's because you have no sense of tradition. I used to feel that of continuity.

J.

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British Museum reading room was going on for ever
I felt I could take 15 years over a book; I
wanted to take longer & longer. Whereas you wrote
& publish at 18. Tom agreed. Tom
agreed to mostly this, but reserved his idea of
God. Gh Bowen came in, raged like a Zebra,
violent stuttering. Had also been brought up
to repress, by moral ancestors. " 34.
L. said Jews with great morality but no religion.
Jerold his mother on immortality.
M. talked about Marlowe Norman the governor
of the B of E. an elf; an artist; sitting with his
cloak round him hunched up. saying "I can't
remember." " then evading all questions —
triumphing — going away dispersed — going mad.
also about Douglas, the Credit man, trying
to pass 7. interviewed; & whenever they came to
saying "To explain this I must go back to
beginning".
M. The moving nature
on becoming a fellow of Kings. how they go to the Chapel & lock
the doors after service; & sit in their pews. & then the Provost
asks the one to come up & puts his hands
on his hands & reads out a statement, about
preserving the laws & traditions; & then they
all shake hands & he is admitted to the brotherhood,
a society for research, religion, &
education. And then he is accepted as a
brother whom they will support & sustain.
This is a great moment; & there is nothing
very ceremonious: religious: only an
admittance. I said did this society,
this coming together move him. M said
very much. # Keynes was felt such
solicitude & feeling.

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Ireland.

Glengariff

This is the 30th of April, Monday. So I think. foreign travel not leading to thought. A mixture of Greece, Italy & Cornwall: great loneliness; poverty & dreary villages like squares cut out of West Kensington. Not a single villa or house a-building; great stretches of virgin sea shore; the original land that Cornwall & much of England was in Elizabethan times. And a sense that life is receding. At Limerick the Tchekov innkeeper said they're all going away, leaving their houses; nothing kept up since the war. So the old man on the [illegible] Island here said today — the very sad gentle old man who longed to talk. All gone — what good did the war do anyone! Only the Americans. And ~~[illegible]~~ Cromwell & moaned leaning on the rake with which he was heaping up some kind of weed. Yet there is

great melancholy in a deserted land, though the beauty remains untouched — miles & miles of Killarney — the lake water lapping the stones, the butterflies flitting, & not a Cockney there. Today, sitting on the verandah after lunch, the German lawyer having been forced to go to the Island — a string of touts loaf about pressing poetry & boats on one — after they had gone, the invalid, who reminds me of Kelly Cecil began to talk as they all began to talk; & said she came from Limerick & when we asked if one could get a house there, she said — she laughed a great deal yet seems hopelessly crippled — "you can get plenty, but it's not so nice when you have one" "Servant difficulties?" I asked — "Ah, all that" she said, & one can see, after Bowen's Court how ramshackle & half squalid the Irish life is, how empty & poverty stricken. There we

there one night, unfortunately with baboon Conolly & his golliwog slug wife Jean to bring in the roar of the Chelsea bombers, & it was all as it should be – pompous & pretentious & imitative & ruined – a great barrack of grey stone, 4 stories & basements, like a town house, high empty rooms, & a scattering of Italian plasterwork, marble mantelpieces, inlaid with brass & so on. All the furniture clumsy solid cut out of single wood – the wake sofa, with the dead lay – carpets shrunk in the great rooms, tattered farm girls waiting. the old man of 90 in his cabin who would let me go – E. h had to say yes the Ladies are very well several times: And we went to the wishing well, where there are broken cups as offerings & half a rosary & L. wished that Rika might not smell, which made me laugh: & then I talked to the cook, & she showed me the wheel for blowing the fire in the windy hearth

kitchen, half underground — rather like the Bride of Lammermuir — Caleb showing the guests nothing — no there was a fine turkey but everywhere desolation & pretension. Cracked grand pianos. Faked old portraits. Stained walls — a yet with character & charm, looking onto a meadow where the trees stand in a ring called Lamb's Cradle — Talk too much of the Chelsea bar kind, owing to C's — about drinking in society called Bostock, about Iceland with Alan a good humoured bolt eyed fat hospitable man... So on hour over the mountains. And pray God the C's dont throw their Gorilla tales at dinner, or invade the old Squires library in what we sit.

Waterville — Monday 1st May

too like its name; blowing the spray & the rain over a flat land. & a scattering of hideous 1890 watering place houses. Met today, wind tonight; & L. opening the first times to come our way. said

George Duckworth is dead— so he is. And I feel the usual incongruous shades of feeling, one from the year, one from that— how great a part he used to play & now scarcely any. But I remember the genuine glow, from last summer when I went to see him— the thing that always made me laugh & yet was marked in him. But how little he meant, after his marriage— & yet how childhood goes with him— the batting, the laughter, the treats, the presents, taking us for bus rides to see fairview Churches, giving us tea at City Inns, & so on— that were the past which oddly enough returned at late years a little, with the Lincoln sausage, the bottles of Eau de Cologne, the great bunch of flowers. Margaret I remember playing round him, & I thought how happy in their way they were. But this is all happening far off. Here I sit on my bed in the windy seaside hotel, & wait for dinner, with this usual sense of time shifting & life becoming unreal, so soon to vanish while the world will go on millions upon millions of years.

Glen beigh
Wednesday
May 2nd

Ah again, after an extremely interesting encounter at the windy hotel with Ireland — that is Mr. & Mrs. Rowlands: he a giant, very shapely, small head obliterated features: she small, abrupt, vivacious. They began directly — & so we talked, — they accepted us as their sort, & were gentry, Irish gentry, very much so, he with a house 900 years old, & no land left. "But I love my King & Country — whatever they ask me to do I'd do it" — this with great emotion. Oh yes, we believe in the British Empire; we hate the madman de Valera: " There they live, 14 miles from Cork, painting, with an old retriever dog, & go to bazaars miles & miles away — That's the way we live — no nonsense about us — not like the English people — Now I'll give you my name, & I'll write to my friend who'll tell you of a house — & I hope you'll live in Ireland. We want people like ourselves. But wait till the budget!" Then she said with all the airs of the Irish gentry:

something very foreign about her, like old Lady Gregory. & get in slave to London: as of course Everyone wants to be English. We think England talking of us — not a bit. So said the obliterated speck [illegible], for such he was, when I was courting my wife — she lived in Liverpool — the young chaps used to say "Now Paddy tell us one of your stories" but now they don't take any interest in us. But I'd do anything for my King & Country. though you've always treated us very badly.

So we got on to the Bowens; & established ourselves as of their sort. Go I tell this is the animal that lives in the shell. There are the ways they live — he hunting all day; she bustling about in her old car; & Everybody Knowing Everybody & laughing & talking & hiccuping; & Great poverty & some tradition of gentle birth; & all the sons going away to make their livings, & the old people sitting there hating the [illegible] Free State & recalling Dublin & the Viceroy. And so Tralee & saw the [illegible] coming down the road & thought of G— being buried.

Adare.
May II 1929 3rd

Miggie looking out names on maps at the moment.
"That gives me a very good idea of .....
What I wd suggest if I might - tomorrow
on the way - we're coming down from Killarney
tomorrow - then another thing, wd you like
to go to Glengarriff - (They are 4 fattish
unattractive but kindly women - won't take
our fire, we're sitting in the hotel lounge
after a long day driving & I certainly
cant read Proust or even write such a patter going
on. We have a roaring great fire.
Later. I thought you'd made up your mind
to do this part first - well then tomorrow.
Listen - wd that be too much for -
I don't want to beat the springs of that car.
That's another idea - we're going West.
To copy down conversation is not very interesting.
People say the same thing over & over again.
I wd like to describe the publication of
such conversation, which was Mrs.
Fitzgerald last night. She is
exactly the great French lady - only living
in a black jersey on an Irish bog.
After dinner she came in, ostensibly to
lend us a paper & offer advice, in
fact to indulge her genius for talk.
She talked till 11, & wd. willingly
be talking now: about hotel keeping

about Gisgdacre, about her grandmother sitting on a chair in the kitchen & saying "That's done that wants another 2 minutes & soon," never stirring herself but somehow getting it done. We have the name of being good housekeepers. Then on about dogs, she has bought several payments because now there may be money in it. However I can give no notion of the flowing, yet formed sentences, the richness & ease of the language; the lay out, dexterity & adroitness of the arrangement. Then was the story of old Julia the cook, who had gone off home in a huff jealous of the young maid; had her daughter & the London husband on her, bought them gramophone records, & now went own that she has wasted her savings. Mrs F. is one of those bluntnosed parted haired hukwomen with luminous brown eyes & something sardonic & secretive in her expression. Talk is to her an intoxicant. but there is as Mr. Rowlands said, something heartless about her: quite cold indifferent sarcastic, for all the melody, then fluency, that adorable ease & forthcomingness. She was very much on the spot accurate, managing.

Shrewd, hardheaded, analytic. Why arent these people the greatest novelists in the world? — with their facility, their balance, their fundamental (now L- has joined me & is advising the 3 ladies are they American?
Its very kind of you telling us: thank you very much. Now the woman is brawling. Everything looks nice in fine weather. I think I'll go to bed. I want you to read them. One is the director of the other. severe, but apologetic. perhaps paid for.
But why isnt Mrs F. a great novelist? Certainly the salon survives at Glenbeigh; the best for talk. & finishing ones sentences — only with — complete naturalness — For instance, explaining the bogs, "saturated, now whats the opposite word? Desiccated. L- suggested, & she adopted it with pleasure. She said one could never understand the Irish. one had to live as they did. They sit in their cottages talking about politics; they dont dance much; they have no amusements. They almost wanted to poach on her bog merely because she had bought it — otherwise it had been left alone for centuries. The bogs are full of trees. Cant be self planted, so orderly, but who who has planted them? And they burn

in a unknown way — poup — puf! — but in a flash. like petrol. Suddenly she became serious & thought me a fool. "What does this good lady mean?" Her grandmother was an innkeeper; the lady went away for 25 years: Oh, as my grandmother said, one becomes able to read people's characters before they step over the door, & one's never wrong one way or the other. Her quickness was amazing. The moment the talk began, L. very slightly put out her hand. "Oh I knew that means you want to get off all" — so we parted from the last representative of the French salon & the 18th century this strange mixture of country lady, peasant, & landlady. Oh but the Irish great loudspeaker is inferior like everything else in this docom trodden land. Things cant be worse, said the one armed man — his artificial arm wore a black woollen glove — who warned us all the way walk, then showed us the full horror of Dunraven Castle, built from 1835 to 1850 like the setting of Ireland, a French Château in grey stone costing a million, & better suited to the grand. Nessa waits that space before he did wanted Nessa & me to write to him — what she did. What was in his mind? some old memory? some regret? I wonder.

Galway
Friday
May ~~6th~~ 4th

a phrase needs this windy day: the clouds looping up their skirts & letting down a shaft of light. We picked bright blue gentians on the cliff looking towards the Aran Islands. This, though rainy & cloudy, was one of our best drives — to the sea; miles over folds of wild land with one or two orange & yellow white cottages: the sea blue, stone coloured or deep black: the waves tossing their hair back. People gathering sea weed & heaping carts. Extreme poverty. So on to Galway which has 2 great bookshops, otherwise wild, poor, sordid. We saw the Claddagh: shawled women, coated men, all standing in groups together beside thatched huts, like islanders, waiting for a funeral. This the original Irish peasantry; G. Thomson whom we found sitting before his Greek books in a little room looking on the sea came to the hotel after dinner & told us how they spend their lives in talk. Dont mind poverty so much. His teaching of Galway Greek in Irish. Directly he went, at 11, up started a weed pale Irish man

Galway
May 5th 6
or 7th
Fri Sat.
May 5th

& poured forth more talk. "I hear you're going to Dublin: Please don't miss the Guinness brewery or the 4 mummified nuns." & so on. He was agent for a Radio Company & was touring Ireland: was Irish, but had lived in America: a mixture of Siegfried Sassoon & Robert Graves to look at, but internally preoccupied with breweries & nuns. Pouring wet: a gale: & off now to Dublin.

Dublin
6th May

It is very windy wet cold, & I am sitting alone after lunch in the lounge with a grey black knitting woman. The scene is St Stephens Green, an ~~Irish~~ Irish attempt at Lincolns Inn Field, just as Merrion Square attempts Bedford Sqre & so on. We lunched at the Shelbourne; & there are the film actors: here they are too. Aran islanders, in thick tweeds, who sit over the fire downstairs singing what may be hymns. There I heard Irish for the first time. This is a dreary waiting moment. L. has to write letters. Then perhaps we go to the Gallery. An air of inferiority creeps over

Empire or Queen or Royal Everywhere. A visitor from England brings back news of picture galleries, theatres. Here it is a mixture of Hampstead-Cambridge. At the Gate Theatre last night we were not sure which it was: there's an edge of difference. The play was good: about Emmett, advanced, pseudo-Auden, I imagine. & these instruments to make music. A certain that violent glow; much satire of the Irish love of bloodshed; satire of the attempt at culture; a hidden sense & came over me of being in the midst of history — that is of being in an unsettled feverish place, which would have its period given it in the books: anything may happen. Yet what can happen when the best restaurant in the capital is Jammet's, when there is only boiled potatoes in the biggest hotel in Dublin? Everywhere they seem to be living on watered wine at last I gather why, if I were Irish, I should wish to belong to the Empire: no luxury, no creation, no stir, only the dregs of London, rather wishwashy as if unenhanced. Yet, I thought too at the Gate, they may

have a spirit in them somewhere, that could make something of freed. But they are freed, I continue — & indeed the play said, sardonically, & only this provinciality is the result. I don't believe in the songs of the Aran islanders, or in old men who can't read — that is, they're not apparently Homer. Their voices penetrate the glass door. The nothing lady has left the fire out. The Arans are going out in full dress. I must run & see.

And I ran, & found a hot fire downstairs; & the old woman in the red shawl has moved off. Coming in yesterday I thought here were the cream of Dublin, meeting a cauliflower faced young man of redolent charm in the hall; & a fine bluff, red general man, & the little boys — were the ancient aristocracy of Ireland, I said, but it turned out to be the producer — who lodges at the Shelbourne — & his troop, who lodge here. A quarrel is going on between a lady & the manager. Nothing in the wide world [illegible] have induced me so. This is what affects orderly composition & makes it impossible for me to finish — Most unsatisfactory — with your inclusive board — look up my post card —

16

No, it wouldn't do living in Ireland: in sight of the rocks & the desolate bays. It would lower the pulse of the heart: & all one's mind would run out in talk. "Its awfully nice to see you & looking so well—" That old wreck of a tall Irish gentleman in Merrion Square is about 3 times the size of Bedford Square: at one time a passion for glory must have seized on the Irish, & then having run up street after street of Bedford Row all they went. Doctors & lawyers have crept in to the 18th Century shells. Outside they're now discussing the character of the lady who's so angry— She's handsome, she's fine, but ... who did she marry? & so on. Talk, talk, talk. It was nice looking at all— in the good old days they used to come.

Grafton Street is below the level of Sloane Street. The Quays are much like the Paris quays. Bookshops. Long architectural vistas: one house after another, but some a storey too tall. Very broad streets. Our car too proud. —this is what makes it impossible for me to finish Roast. I was about to say. Yet its been one of our most amusing tours. Wonky for the talk talk talk—.

Tuesday
8th May
Worcester.

We finished up [illegible] Dublin in grand style
yesterday. On the windy, indeed roaring
windy Sunday we walked through Phoenix
Park, where a crowd – the masses there
lacking entertainment – watched a School
of small girls playing hockey: had tea
at Leixlip, pronounced Leeslip, an
18th century bare parlour, nice woman
who had a child ill, & had been having
a guest from Manitoba who said she
was descended from the Kings – & then off
we went down a leafy country lane – but the
trees were lacking, one great bough fallen
across the road – to Celbridge, where
the famous interview with the blue
eyes – I forget the precise phrase – took place.
A girl said the Abbey was the big house
down the road – then a thick grey sham
gothic Abbey, but weathered now to look
ancient, with sham Cathedral windows
bricked up, & a great garden, all trees &
bower pathways leading down to the river.
That was where she sat there: & ~~whose~~
the dead house. But we could not see into
the garden from the Bank to go down
the next day what was
home again

oddly enough, yesterday, for now time the Channel has
cut off Ireland, & here in Waterville. the ancient,
rich, traditional all that shifty poverty
seems blotted out – yesterday we went first
to the State gate. of which I say nothing – the
pictures are very highly charmed – & then to
St Patricks. where, over the door are the
tremendous words; & in front of the door a
diamond shaped brass, to mark the Dean's
tomb – there beside him till a few years ago
slept Stella; but the late Bishop, rather
very sarcastically remarked, pointing to
her name opprobriously on the long list,
decided that she was ~~[illegible]~~ buried at some
[illegible], & so moved her brass plate.
I suspect this was prudery; – if Swift
was buried in her grave. that seems to
amount to marriage. Also her epitaph
which he wrote, alludes to ~~the~~ her
being celebrated by him. However the
Bishop moved them – & in prudery also
Lord Guinness has cased all the old
pillars of Irish marble in stucco, so
that they look like South Kensington,
& somebody else, equally pretty, has
flooded the whole building with black-
red tiles such as there are in hotels —

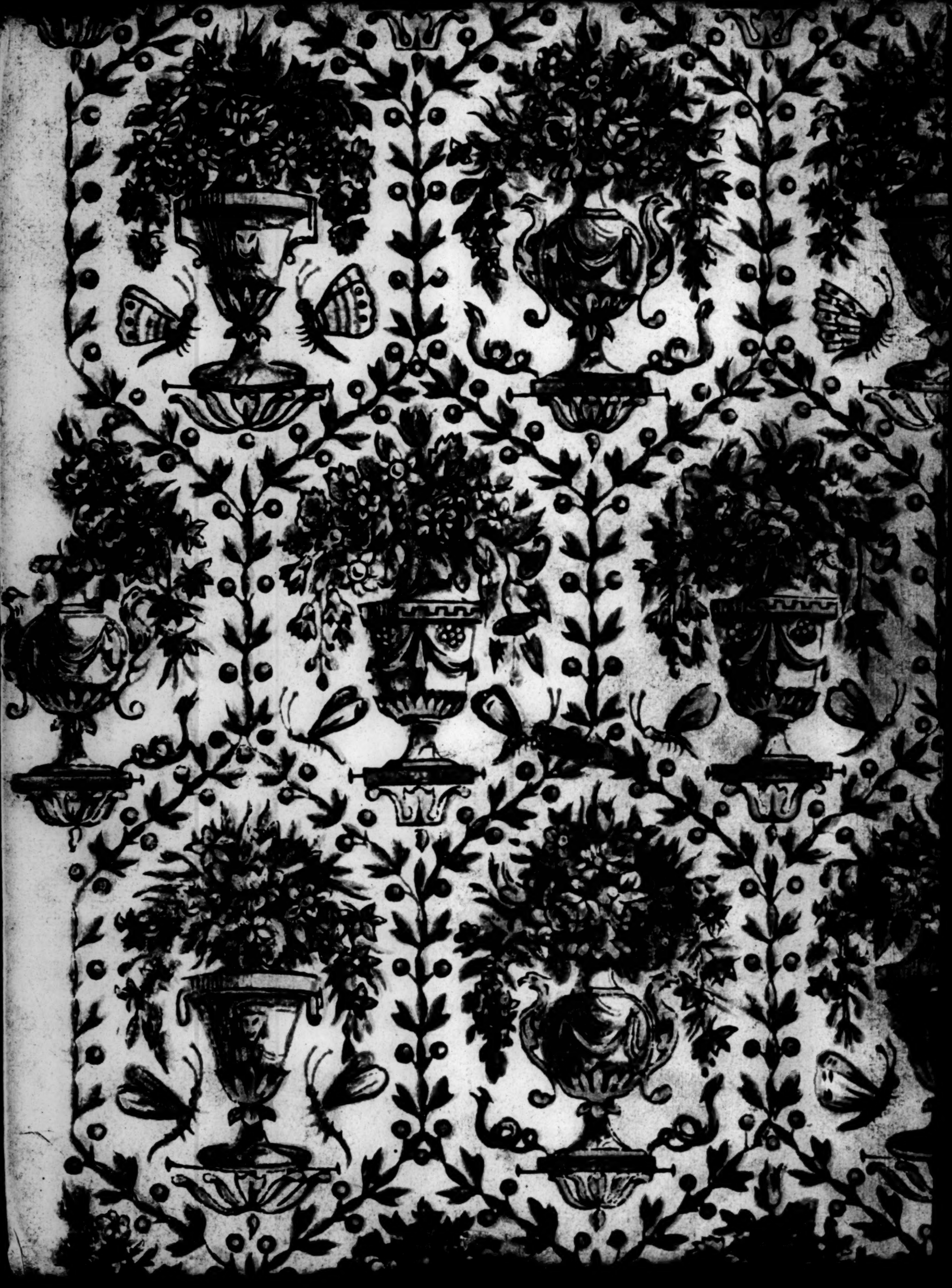
much to the dudgeon of the old verger, who, like everybody else, regretted the old days — showed us the stalls of the Knights of St Patrick, with their helmets & arms, one the Prince of Wales's another the Duke of Connaught "but they don't come here now —" He too, like the shopkeepers & hotel keepers would gladly have done with the President the Free State. "We don't want this hate — it does nobody any good" as the porter at Holyhead said to me this morning when he remarked how few cattle now came over. And at breakfast — the best I have ever eaten, because the coffee was good — I said to L. all the people themselves are sensible: what's come over the politicians? And this we debated, & then took to the road in the wet & cold & drove on a downpour through Wales, through Shrewsbury (disappointing) through Much Wenlock (good) & much green & prosperous country till we reached Worcester & took up lodging for the last time at the Star. L. told me not to stare so at the other tea drinkers,

but I find it difficult not to jeer at these real
English, these dwellers in the very heart of the land,
who talk of horses & games all the time; & I
meet them men friends in the lounge, & sit
drinking & laughing & bantering country jokes
under pictures of salmon & of horses.
Horses rule England, as salmon rule Ireland.
In every hotel in Ireland sits a military
man with poached egg eyes & sandy
hair, a loud commanding voice, &
spongebag coat & red slippers, after a day's
fishing. There he sits & drinks; & all day
he fishes — landing salmon after salmon,
spots at Galway. So that they lie along
the bank. To the wonder of the intellectual
German lawyer, whom we met again there.
He told us he saw them fishing all day,
& a day costs £2. & they must give
back half the fish they catch, & so much
on every fish caught to the man with the
Gaff. He marvelled. And that's what
Ireland is kept for: ~~a hotel~~ in every place

where there's a weir is built a large Inn, with town
Cooking & hot water & ladies & gentlemen's lavatories,
though there's nothing but bog & hills for miles around,
& there in the lounge the mayors sit, & pay
for their fishing, while the natives talk & talk
& talk – about the old kings of Ireland,
presumably. Not that their folklore is
* very interesting, Thompson said. An odd
division of the country.
And here we are amidst the wealth of
Worcester. Richer than ever it seems – this
Cathedral city. Set in the centre of ancient
glovemaking & porcelain making, of
Queen Anne guildhalls, with a jostle of the
usual 16th century ecclesiastical houses,
indeed in Much Wenlock there is more
ancient stone & carving & architecture to be
seen than in the whole of Ireland.
* We are very tired of holiday & glad that this is
our last night. Though the comfort is
extreme.

This the 9th of May was our last day. & fine. So we saw Warwickshire — but I've been reading the monologue & note how oddly another style infects — at its best: thick green, thick leaves, stubby yellow stone houses, & a fine sprinkling of Elizabethan cottages. All this led very harmoniously to Stratford on Avon: & all Crabbe be damned — this a fine, un self Conscious town, mixed, with 18th Century & the usual standing cheek by jowl. All the flowers were out in Shre's garden. "That was where his study window looked out when he wrote the Tempest" said the man". And perhaps it was true. Anyhow it was a great big house, looking straight at the large windows & the grey stone of the School chapel, & when the clock struck, that was the sound Shre heard. I cannot without more labour than my road running mind can compass describe the queer impression of sunny impersonality. Yes, everything seemed to say, this was Shakespeare's, had he sat & walked; but you wont find me

not ghastly in the flesh. He is serenely absent-present;
both absence; radiating round me: yes: in the
flowers, in the old hall, in the garden: but never
to be pinned down. And we went to the
Church, & there was the flashy foolish bust,
(but what I had not reckoned for was the worn
simple slab, turned the wrong way, ~~Forbear~~
* Kind Friend for Jesus sake forbear—
again he seemed to be all air & sun
smiling serenely: & yet down there one foot
from me lay the little bones that had spread
over the world this vast illumination:
Yes, & then we walked round the church,
& all is simple & a little worn; the river
slipping past the stone wall with a red
breadth in it from some flowering tree,
& the edge of the turf unkept, soft &
green & muddy, & ~~two~~ two casual
* nonchalant swans. The church & the
school & the house are all roomy
spacious places, resonant, empty today,
& ~~& F~~ in & out unseen—yes, &
unpretentious places: * still living, &
then the little bones lying there, which
have created: to think of writing the Tempest
looking out on that garden: what a rage &

Storm of thought to have gone over my mind;
no doubt the solidity of the place was comfortable.
No doubt he saw the cellars with serenity -
And a few sealed American jugs: a
good deal of parrot prattle from old
Gramophone discs at the birthplace, one
taking up the story from the other. But
I must add, the caretaker at New Place
agreed, that only one genuine signature)
(? is known; & all the rest, books,
furniture pictures &c. has completely
vanished? Now I think she was very
happy in this, that there was no
impediment of fame, but his genius flowed
out of him, & is still there, in Stratford,
They were acting As You Like it I think.
in the theatre.
Warn the biographers not to make more
hum & melody out of New Place - I would,
so I think. For the man told us that
after the great grand daughter's death
there was a sale: & why shouldn't
some of his things, he said, be lost, put away
& come to light? Also, Queen H. Maria,
Charles the 1st's Queen stayed there at

New Place with the grand daughter (?) which shows how substantial it must have been. That he told us. I had never heard. And he said Gastrell, the clergyman had the original house, which stretched across the garden almost to the Chapel, pulled down because people bothered him, asking to see Shre's house. And there (between the window & the wall) was the room he died in. A [illegible] mulberry reputes to be the scion of the tree that grew outside the window. Great cushions of blue yellow white flowers in the garden, which is open, so that the living go on walking & sitting there.